MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS. VOL. V.

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MISCELLANIES.

DIDEROT.[1]

[1833.]

THE *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, on which, as we may say, the world has, now for eighteen centuries, had its foundation, are written in so small a compass, that they can be read in one little hour. The *Acts* of the *French Philosophes*, the importance of which is already fast exhausting itself, lie recorded in whole acres of typography, and would furnish reading for a lifetime. Nor is the stock, as we see, yet anywise complete, or within computable distance of completion. Here are Four quite new Octavos, recording the labours, voyages, victories, amours and indigestions of the Apostle Denis: it is but a year or two since a new contribution on Voltaire came before us; since Jean Jacques had a new *Life* written for him; and then of those *Feuilles de Grimm*, what incalculable masses may yet lie dormant in the Petersburg Library, waiting only to be awakened and let slip!—Reading for a lifetime? Thomas Parr might begin reading in long-clothes, and stop in his last hundred and fiftieth year without having ended. And then, as to when the process of addition will cease, and the Acts

[1] FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. 22.—1. *Mémoires, Correspondance et Ouvrages inédits de Diderot; publiés d'après les manuscrits confiés, en mourant, par l'auteur à Grimm.* 4 tom. 8vo. Paris (Paulin, Libraire-Editeur), 1831.

2. *Œuvres de Denis Diderot; précédées de Mémoires historiques et philosophiques sur sa Vie et ses Ouvrages, par J. A. Naigeon.* 22 tom. 8vo. Paris (Brière), 1821.

and Epistles of the Parisian Church of Antichrist will have completed themselves; except in so far as the quantity of paper written on, or even manufactured, in those days, being finite and not infinite, the business one day or other must cease, and the Antichristian Canon close for the last time,—we yet know nothing.

Meanwhile, let us nowise be understood as lamenting this stupendous copiousness, but rather as viewing it historically with patience, and indeed with satisfaction. Memoirs, so long as they are true, how stupid soever, can hardly be accumulated in excess. The stupider they are, let them simply be the sooner cast into the oven; if true, they will always instruct more or less, were it only in the way of confirmation and repetition; and, what is of vast moment, they do not *mis*instruct. Day after day looking at the high destinies which yet await Literature, which Literature will ere long address herself with more decisiveness than ever to fulfil, it grows clearer to us that the proper task of Literature lies in the domain of BELIEF; within which 'Poetic Fiction,' as it is charitably named, will have to take a quite new figure, if allowed a settlement there. Whereby were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of Novel-writers and suchlike, must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things: either retire into nurseries, and work for children, minors and semifatuous persons of both sexes; or else, what were far better, sweep their Novel-fabric into the dust-cart, and betake them with such faculty as they have to understand and record what is *true*,—of which, surely, there is, and will forever be, a whole Infinitude unknown to us, of infinite importance to us! Poetry, it will more and more come to be understood, is nothing but higher Knowledge; and the only genuine Romance (for grown persons) Reality. The Thinker is the Poet, the Seer: let him who *sees* write down according to his gift of sight; if deep and with inspired vision, then creatively, poetically; if common, and with only uninspired everyday vision, let him at least be faithful in this and write *Memoirs*.

On us still so near at hand, that Eighteenth Century in Paris presenting itself nowise as portion of the magic web of Universal History, but only as the confused and ravelled mass of threads and thrums, ycleped *Memoirs*, in process of *being*

woven into such,—imposes a rather complex relation. Of which, however, as of all such, the leading rules may be happily comprised in this very plain one, prescribed by Nature herself: to search in them, so far as they seem worthy, for whatsoever can help us forward on our own path, were it in the shape of intellectual instruction, of moral edification, nay of mere solacement and amusement. The Bourbons, indeed, took a shorter method (the like of which has been often recommended elsewhere): they shut-up and hid the *graves* of the Philosophes, hoping that their lives and writings might likewise thereby go out of sight and out of mind; and thus the whole business would be, so to speak, *suppressed*. Foolish Bourbons! These things were not done in a corner, but on high places, before the anxious eyes of all mankind: hidden they can in nowise be: to conquer them, to resist them, our first indispensable preliminary is to see and comprehend them. To us, indeed, as their immediate successors, the right comprehension of them is of prime necessity; for, sent of God or of the Devil, they have plainly enough gone before us, and left us such and such a world: it is on ground of their tillage, with the stubble of their harvest standing on it, that we now have to plough. Before all things, then, let us understand what ground it is; what manner of men and husbandmen these were. For which reason, be all authentic Philosophe-Memoirs welcome, each in its kind! For which reason, let us now, without the smallest reluctance, penetrate into this wondrous Gospel according to Denis Diderot, and expatiate there, to see whether it will yield us aught.

In any phenomenon, one of the most important moments is the *end*. Now this epoch of the Eighteenth or Philosophe-century was properly the End; the End of a Social System which for above a thousand years had been building itself together, and, after that, had begun, for some centuries (as human things all do), to moulder down. The mouldering-down of a Social System is no cheerful business either to form part of, or to look at: however, at length, in the course of it, there comes a time when the mouldering changes into a rushing; active hands drive-in their wedges, set-to their crowbars; there is a comfortable appearance of work going on. Instead of here

and there a stone falling out, here and there a handful of dust, whole masses tumble down, whole clouds and whirlwinds of dust: torches too are applied, and the rotten easily takes fire: so, what with flame-whirlwind, what with dust-whirlwind, and the crash of falling towers, the concern grows eminently interesting; and our assiduous craftsmen can encourage one another with *Vivats*, and cries of *Speed the work*. Add to this, that of all labourers, no one can see such rapid extensive fruit of his labour as the Destroyer can and does: it will not seem unreasonable that measuring from effect to cause, he should esteem his labour as the best and greatest; and a Voltaire, for example, be by his guild-brethren and apprentices confidently accounted 'not only the greatest man of this age, but of all 'past ages, and perhaps the greatest that Nature could pro-'duce.' Worthy old Nature! She goes on producing whatsoever is needful in each season of her course; and produces, with perfect composure, that Encyclopedist opinion, that she can produce no more.

Such a torch-and-crowbar period, of quick rushing-down and conflagration, was this of the *Siècle de Louis Quinze;* when the Social System having all fallen into rottenness, rain-holes and noisome decay, the shivering natives resolved to cheer their dull abode by the questionable step of setting it on fire. Questionable we call their manner of procedure; the thing itself, as all men may now see, was inevitable; one way or other, whether by prior burning or milder methods, the old house must needs be new-built. We behold the business of pulling down, or at least of assorting the rubbish, still go resolutely on, all over Europe: here and there some traces of new foundation, of new building-up, may now also, to the eye of Hope, disclose themselves.

To get acquainted with Denis Diderot and his life were to see the significant epitome of all this, as it works on the thinking and acting soul of a man, fashions for him a singular element of existence, gives himself therein a peculiar hue and figure. Unhappily, after all that has been written, the matter still is not luminous: to us strangers, much in that foreign economy, and method of working and living, remains obscure; much in the man himself, and his inward nature and structure. But indeed, it is several years since the present Reviewer gave

up the idea of what could be called *understanding* any man whatever, even himself. Every Man, within that inconsiderable figure of his, contains a whole Spirit-kingdom and Reflex of the ALL; and, though to the eye but some six standard feet in size, reaches downwards and upwards, unsurveyable, fading into the regions of Immensity and of Eternity. Life everywhere, as woven on that stupendous ever-marvellous 'Loom of Time,' may be said to fashion itself of a woof of light, indeed, yet on a warp of mystic darkness: only He that created it can understand it. As to this Diderot, had we once got so far that we could, in the faintest degree, personate him; take upon ourselves his character and his environment of circumstances, and act his Life over again, in that small Private-Theatre of ours (under our own Hat), with moderate illusiveness and histrionic effect,—*that* were what, in conformity with common speech, we should name *understanding* him, and could be abundantly content with.

In his manner of appearance before the world, Diderot has been, perhaps to an extreme degree, unfortunate. His literary productions were invariably dashed-off in hottest haste, and left generally on the waste of Accident, with an ostrich-like indifference. He had to live, in France, in the sour days of a *Journal de Trevoux;* of a suspicious, decaying Sorbonne. He was too poor to set foreign presses, at Kehl or elsewhere, in motion; too headlong and quick of temper to seek help from those that could: thus must he, if his pen was not to lie idle, write much of which there was no publishing. His Papers accordingly are found flying about, like Sibyl's leaves, in all corners of the world: for many years no tolerable Collection of his Writings was attempted; to this day there is none that in any sense can be called perfect. Two spurious, surreptitious Amsterdam Editions, 'or rather formless, blundering Agglomerations,' were all that the world saw during his life. Diderot did not hear of these for several years, and then only, it is said, 'with peals of laughter,' and no other practical step whatever. Of the four that have since been printed (or *re*printed, for Naigeon's, of 1798, is the great original), no one so much as pretends either to be complete, or selected on any system. Brière's, the latest, of which alone we have much personal knowledge, is a well-printed book, perhaps better worth buying

than any of the others ; yet without arrangement, without coherence, purport; often lamentably in need of commentary ; on the whole, in reference to the wants and specialties of this time, as good as *un*edited. Brière seems, indeed, to have hired some person, or thing, to play the part of Editor ; or rather more things than one, for they sign themselves Editors in the plural number ; and from time to time, throughout the work, some asterisk attracts us to the bottom of the leaf, and to some printed matter subscribed 'EDITS.:' but unhappily the journey is for most part in vain ; in the course of a volume or two, we learn too well that nothing is to be gained there ; that the Note, whatever it professedly treat of, will, in strict logical speech, mean only as much as to say : 'Reader ! thou perceivest that 'we Editors, to the number of at least two, are alive, and if 'we had any information would impart it to thee.—EDITS.' For the rest, these 'EDITS.' are polite people ; and with this uncertainty (as to their being persons or things) clearly before them, continue, to all appearance, in moderately good spirits.

One service they, or Brière for them (if, indeed, Brière is not himself they, as we sometimes surmise), have accomplished for us : sought out and printed the long-looked-for, long-lost *Life of Diderot* by Naigeon. The lovers of biography had for years sorrowed over this concealed Manuscript, with a wistfulness from which hope had nigh fled. A certain Naigeon, the beloved disciple of Diderot, had (if his own word, in his own editorial Preface, was to be credited) written a Life of him ; and, alas ! whither was it now vanished ? Surely all that was dark in Denis the Fatalist had there been illuminated : nay, was there not, probably, a glorious 'Light-Street' carried through that whole Literary Eighteenth Century ? And was not Diderot, long belauded as 'the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed,' now to show himself as such, in—the new Practical Encyclopedia, philosophic, economic, speculative, digestive, of LIFE, in threescore and ten Years, or Volumes ? Diderot too was known as the vividest, noblest talker of his time : considering all that Boswell, with his slender opportunities, had made of Johnson, what was there we had not a right to expect !

By Brière's endeavour, as we said, the concealed Manuscript of Naigeon now lies, as published Volume, on this desk.

Alas, a written *life*, too like many an acted life, where hope is one thing, fulfilment quite another! Perhaps, indeed, of all biographies ever put together by the hand of man, this of Naigeon's is the most uninteresting. Foolish Naigeon! We wanted to see and know how it stood with the bodily man, the clothed, boarded, bedded, working and warfaring Denis Diderot, in that Paris of his; how he looked and lived, what he did, what he said: had the foolish Biographer so much as told us what colour his stockings were! Of all this, beyond a date or two, not a syllable, not a hint; nothing but a dull, sulky, snuffling, droning, interminable lecture on Atheistic Philosophy; how Diderot came upon Atheism, how he taught it, how true it is, how inexpressibly important. Singular enough, the zeal of *the devil's* house had eaten Naigeon up. A man of coarse, mechanical, perhaps intrinsically rather feeble intellect; and then, with the vehemence of some pulpit-drumming 'Gowkthrapple,' or 'precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel,'—only that *his* kirk is of the *other* complexion! Yet must he too see himself in a wholly backsliding world, where much theism and other scandal still rules; and many times Gowkthrapple Naigeon be tempted to weep by the streams of Babel. Withal, however, he is *wooden;* thoroughly mechanical, as if Vaucanson himself had made him; and that singularly tempers his fury. Let the reader, finally, admire the bounteous produce of this Earth, and how one element bears nothing but the other matches it: here have we not the truest *odium theologicum*, working quite *demono*logically, in a worshipper of the Everlasting Nothing! So much for Naigeon; what we looked for from him, and what we have got.

Must Diderot, then, be given up to oblivion, or remembered not as Man, but merely as Philosophic-Atheistic Logic-Mill? Did not Diderot live, as well as think? An Amateur reporter in some of the Biographical Dictionaries declares that he heard him talk one day, in nightgown and slippers, for the space of two hours, concerning earth, sea and air, with a fulgorous impetuosity almost beyond human, rising from height to height, and at length finish the climax by 'dashing his nightcap against the wall.' Most readers will admit this to be biography: we, alas, must say, it comprises nearly all about the Man Diderot that hitherto would abide with us.

Here, however, comes 'Paulin, Publishing-Bookseller,' with a quite new contribution: a long series of Letters, extending over fifteen years; unhappily only love-letters, and from a married sexagenarian; yet still letters from his own hand. Amid these insipid floods of *tendresse*, *sensibilité* and so forth, vapid, like long-decanted small-beer, many a curious biographic trait comes to light; indeed, we can hereby see more of the individual Diderot, and his environment, and method of procedure there, than by all the other books that have yet been published of him. Forgetting or conquering the species of nausea that such a business, on the first announcement of it, may occasion, and in many of the details of it cannot but confirm, the biographic reader will find this well worth looking into. Nay, is it not something, of itself, to see that Spectacle of the Philosophe in Love, or at least zealously endeavouring to fancy himself so? For scientific purposes a considerable tedium, of 'noble sentiment,' and even worse things, can be undergone. How the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed, now on the borders of his grand climacteric, and already provided with wife and child, comports himself in that trying circumstance of preternuptial (and indeed, at such age, and with so many 'indigestions,' almost preternatural) devotion to the queens of this earth, may, by the curious in science, who have nerves for it, be here seen. There is besides a lively *Memoir* of him by Mademoiselle Diderot, though too brief, and not very true-looking. Finally, in one large Volume, his *Dream of d'Alembert*, greatly regretted and commented upon by Naigeon; which we could have done without. For its bulk, that little *Memoir* by Mademoiselle is the best of the whole. Unfortunately, indeed, as hinted, Mademoiselle, resolute of all things to be *piquante*, writes, or rather *thinks*, in a smart, antithetic manner, nowise the fittest for clearness or credibility: without suspicion of voluntary falsehood, there is no appearance that this is a camera-lucida picture, or a portrait drawn by legitimate rules of art. Such resolution to be piquant is the besetting sin of innumerable persons of both sexes, and wofully mars any use there might otherwise be in their writing or their speaking. It is, or was, the fault specially imputed to the French: in a woman and Frenchwoman, who besides has much to tell us, it must even be borne with. And now, from these diverse scattered mate-

rials, let us try how coherent a figure of Denis Diderot, and his earthly Pilgrimage and Performance, we can piece together.

In the ancient Town of Langres, in the month of October 1713, it begins. Fancy Langres, aloft on its hill-top, amid Roman ruins, nigh the sources of the Saone and of the Marne, with its coarse substantial houses, and fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly engaged in knife-grinding; and one of the quickest, clearest, most volatile and susceptive little figures of that century, just landed in the World there. In this French Sheffield, Diderot's Father was a Cutler, master of his craft; a much-respected and respect-worthy man; one of those ancient craftsmen (now, alas! nearly departed from the earth, and sought, with little effect, by idylists, among the 'Scottish peasantry' and elsewhere) who, in the school of practice, have learned not only skill of hand, but the far harder skill of head and of heart; whose whole knowledge and virtue, being by necessity a knowledge and virtue to *do* somewhat, is true, and has stood trial: humble modern patriarchs, brave, wise, simple; of worth rude but unperverted, like genuine unwrought silver, native from the mine! Diderot loved his father, as he well might, and regrets on several occasions that he was painted in holiday clothes, and not in the workday costume of his trade, 'with apron and grinder's-wheel, and spectacles pushed up,'—even as he lived and laboured, and honestly made good for himself the small section of the Universe he pretended to occupy. A man of strictest veracity and integrity was this ancient master; of great insight and patient discretion, so that he was often chosen as umpire and adviser; of great humanity, so that one day crowds of poor were to 'follow him with tears to his long home.' An outspoken Langres neighbour gratified the now fatherless Philosopher with this saying: 'Ah, Monsieur Diderot, you are a famous man, but you will never be your father's equal.' Truly, of all the wonderful illustrious persons that come to view in the biographic part of these six-and-twenty Volumes, it is a question whether this old Langres Cutler is not the worthiest; to us no other suggests himself whose worth can be admitted, without lamentable pollutions and defacements to be deducted from it. The Mother also was a loving-hearted, just woman: so Diderot might account himself well-born; and it is a credit

to the man that he always, were it in the circle of kings and empresses, gratefully did so.

The Jesuits were his schoolmasters: at the age of twelve the encyclopedical head was 'tonsured.' He was quick in seizing, strong in remembering and arranging; otherwise flighty enough; fond of sport, and from time to time getting into trouble. One grand event, significant of all this, he has himself commemorated; his Daughter records it in these terms:

'He had chanced to have a quarrel with his comrades: it had been serious enough to bring on him a sentence of exclusion from college on some day of public examination and distribution of prizes. The idea of passing this important time at home, and grieving his parents, was intolerable; he proceeded to the college-gate; the porter refused him admittance; he presses-in while some crowd is entering, and sets off running at full speed; the porter gets at him with a sort of pike he carried, and wounds him in the side: the boy will not be driven back; arrives, takes the place that belonged to him: prizes of all sorts, for composition, for memory, for poetry, he obtains them all. No doubt he had deserved them; since even the resolution to punish him could not withstand the sense of justice in his superiors. Several volumes, a number of garlands had fallen to his lot; being too weak to carry them all, he put the garlands round his neck, and with his arms full of books, returned home. His mother was at the door; and saw him coming through the public square in this equipment, and surrounded by his schoolfellows: one should be a mother to conceive what she must have felt. He was feasted, he was caressed: but next Sunday, in dressing him for church, a considerable wound was found on him, of which he had not so much as thought of complaining.'

'One of the sweetest moments of my life,' writes Diderot himself of this same business, with a slight variation, 'was more than thirty years ago, and I remember it like yesterday, when my Father saw me coming home from the college, with my arms full of prizes that I had carried off, and my shoulders with the garlands they had given me, which, being too big for my brow, had let my head slip through them. Noticing me at a distance, he threw down his work, hastened to the door to meet me, and could not help weeping. It is a fine sight, a true man and rigorous falling to weep!'

Mademoiselle, in her quick-sparkling way, informs us, nevertheless, that the school-victor, getting tired of pedagogic admonitions and inflictions, whereof there were many, said 'one morning' to his father, 'that he meant to give up school'!—"Thou hadst rather be a cutler, then?"—"With all my heart."—They handed him an apron, and he placed himself beside

his father. He spoiled whatever he laid hands on, penknives, whittles, blades of all kinds. It went on for four or five days; at the end of which he rose, proceeded to his room, got his books there, and returned to college,—and having, it would appear, in this simple manner sown his college wild-oats, never stirred from it again.

To the Reverend Fathers, it seemed that Denis would make an excellent Jesuit; wherefore they set about coaxing and courting, with intent to crimp him. Here, in some minds, a certain comfortable reflection on the diabolic cunning and assiduity of these Holy Fathers, now happily all dissolved and expelled, will suggest itself. Along with which, may another melancholy reflection no less be in place: namely, that these Devil-serving Jesuits should have shown a skill and zeal in their teaching vocation, such as no Heaven-serving body, of what complexion soever, anywhere on our earth now exhibits. To decipher the talent of a young vague Capability, who must one day be a man and a Reality; to take him by the hand, and train him to a spiritual trade, and set him up in it, with tools, shop and goodwill, were doing him in most cases an unspeakable service,—on this one proviso, it is true, that the trade be a just and honest one; in which proviso surely there should lie no hindrance to such service, but rather a help. Nay, could many a poor Dermody, Hazlitt, Heron, Derrick and suchlike, have been trained to be a good Jesuit, were it greatly worse than to have lived painfully as a bad Nothing-at-all? But indeed, as was said, the Jesuits are dissolved; and Corporations of all sorts have perished (from corpulence); and now, instead of the seven corporate selfish spirits, we have the four-and-twenty millions of discorporate selfish; and the rule, *Man, mind thyself*, makes a jumble and a scramble, and crushing press (with dead-pressed figures and dismembered limbs enough); into whose dark chaotic depths (for human Life is ever unfathomable) one shudders to look. Loneliest of all, weakest and worst-bested, in that world-scramble, is the extraordinary figure known in these times as Man of Letters! It appears to be indubitable that this state of matters will alter and improve itself,—in a century or two. But to return:

'The Jesuits,' thus sparkles Mademoiselle, 'employed the temptation, which is always so seductive, of travelling and of liberty; they per-

suaded the youth to quit his home, and set forth with a Jesuit, to whom he was attached. Denis had a friend, a cousin of his own age; he intrusted his secret to him, wishing that he should accompany them. But the cousin, a tamer and discreeter personage, discovered the whole project to the father; the day of departure, the hour, all was betrayed. My grandfather kept the strictest silence; but before going to sleep he carried off the keys of the street-door; and at midnight, hearing his son descend, he presented himself before him, with the question, "Whither bound, at such an hour?" "To Paris," replied the young man, "where I am to join the Jesuits."—"That will not be tonight; but your desires shall be fulfilled: let us in the first place go to sleep."

'Next morning his father engaged two places in the public conveyance, and carried him to Paris, to the College d'Harcourt. He settled the terms of his little establishment, and bade his son good-b'ye. But the worthy man loved his child too well to leave him without being quite satisfied about his situation: he had the constancy to stay a fortnight longer, killing the time, and dying of tedium, in an inn, without seeing the sole object he was delaying for. At the end, he proceeded to the College; and my father has often told me that this proof of tenderness would have made him go to the end of the world, if the old man had required it. "Friend," said he, "I am come to know if your health keeps good; if you are content with your superiors, with your diet, with others and with yourself. If you are not well, if you are not happy, we will go back again to your mother. If you like better to remain here, I have but to speak a word with you, to embrace you, and give you my blessing." The youth assured him that he was perfectly content, that he liked his new abode very much My grandfather then took leave of him, and went to the Principal, to know if he was satisfied with his pupil.'

On which side also the answer proving favourable, the worthy father returned home. Denis saw little more of him; never again residing under his roof; though for many years, and to the last, a proper intercourse was kept up; not, as appears, without a visit or two on the son's part, and certainly with the most unwearied, prudent superintendence and assistance on the father's. Indeed, it was a worthy family, that of the Diderots; and a fair degree of natural affection must be numbered among the virtues of our Philosophe. Those scenes about rural Langres, and the old homely way of life there, as delineated fictitiously in the *Entretien d'un Père avec ses Enfans*, and now more fully, as matter of fact, in this just-published *Correspondance*, are of a most innocent, cheerful, peacefully-secluded character; more pleasing, we might almost say

more poetical, than could elsewhere be gathered out of Diderot's whole Writings. Denis was the eldest of the family, and much looked up to, with all his shortcomings: there was a Brother, who became a clergyman; and a true-hearted, sharp-witted Sister, who remained unmarried, and at times tried to live in partnership with this latter,—rather unsuccessfully. The Clergyman being a conscientious, even strait-laced man, and Denis such as we know, they had, naturally enough, their own difficulties to keep on brotherly terms; and indeed, at length abandoned the task as hopeless. The Abbé stood rigorous by his Breviary, from time to time addressing solemn monitions to the lost Philosophe, who also went on his way. He is somewhat snarled at by the Denisian side of the house for this; but surely without ground: it was his virtue rather; at lowest his destiny. The true Priest, who could, or should, look peaceably on an *Encyclopédie*, is yet perhaps waited for in the world; and of all false things, is not a false Priest the falsest?

Meanwhile Denis, at the College d'Harcourt, learns additional Greek and Mathematics, and quite loses taste for the Jesuit career. Mad pranks enough he played, we doubt not; followed by reprimands. He made several friends, however; got intimate with the Abbé Bernis, Poet at that time, afterwards Cardinal. 'They used to dine together, for six sous 'a-piece, at the neighbouring *Traiteur's;* and I have often 'heard him vaunt the gaiety of these repasts.'

'His studies being finished,' continues Mademoiselle, 'his father wrote to M. Clement de Ris, a Procureur at Paris, and his countryman, to take him as boarder, that he might study Jurisprudence and the Laws. He continued here two years; but the business of *actes* and *inventaires* had few charms for him. All the time he could steal from the office-desk was employed in prosecuting Latin and Greek, in which he thought himself still imperfect; Mathematics, which he to the last continued passionately fond of; Italian, English, &c. In the end he gave himself up so completely to his taste for letters, that M. Clement thought it right to inform his father how ill the youth was employing his time. My grandfather then expressly commissioned M. Clement to urge and constrain him to make choice of some profession, and, once for all, to become Doctor, Procureur, or Advocate. My father begged time to think of it; time was given. At the end of several months these proposals were again laid before him: he answered, that the profession of Doctor did not please him, for he could not think of killing anybody; that the

Procureur business was too difficult to execute with delicacy; that he would willingly choose the profession of Advocate, were it not that he felt an invincible repugnance to occupy himself all his life with other people's business. "But," said M. Clement, "what *will* you be, then?"—"On my word, nothing, nothing whatever (*Ma foi, rien, mais rien du tout*). I love study; I am very happy, very content, and want nothing else."'

Here clearly is a youth of spirit, determined to take the world on the broadside, and eat thereof and be filled. His decided turn, like that of so many others, is for the trade of sovereign prince, in one shape or other; unhappily, however, the capital and outfit to set it up is wanting. Under which circumstances, nothing remains but to instruct M. Clement de Ris that no board-wages will henceforth be paid, and the young sovereign may, at his earliest convenience, be turned out of doors.

What Denis, perched aloft in his own hired attic, may have thought of it now, does not appear. The good old Father, in stopping his allowance, had reasonably enough insisted on one of two things: either that he should betake him to some intelligible method of existence, wherein all help should be furnished him; or else return home within the week. Neither of which could Denis think of doing. A similar demand continued to be reiterated for the next ten years, but always with the like non-effect. King Denis, in his furnished attic, with or without money to pay for it, was now living and reigning, like other kings, 'by the grace of God;' and could nowise resolve to abdicate. A sanguineous, vehement, volatile mortal; young, and in so wide an earth, it seemed to him next to impossible but he must find gold-mines there. He lived, while victual was to be got, taking no thought for the morrow. He had books, he had merry company, a whole piping and dancing Paris round him; he could teach Mathematics, he could turn himself so many ways; nay, might not he become a Mathematician one day; a glorified Savant, and strike the stars with his sublime head! Meanwhile he is like to be overtaken by one of the sharpest of human calamities, 'cleanness of teeth.'

'One Shrove Tuesday morning, he rises, gropes in his pocket; he has not wherewith to dine; will not trouble his friends who have not invited him. This day, which in childhood he had so often passed in

the middle of relations who adored him, becomes sadder by remembrance: he cannot work; he hopes to dissipate his melancholy by a walk; goes to the Invalides, to the Courts, to the Bibliothèque du Roi, to the Jardin des Plantes. You may drive away tedium; but you cannot give hunger the slip. He returns to his quarters; on entering he feels unwell; the landlady gives him a little toast and wine; he goes to bed. "That day," he has often said to me, "I swore that, if ever I came to have anything, I would never in my life refuse a poor man help, never condemn my fellow-creature to a day as painful."'

That Diderot, during all this period, escaped starvation, is plain enough by the result: but how he specially accomplished that, and the other business of living, remains mostly left to conjecture. Mademoiselle, confined at any rate within narrow limits, continues as usual too intent on sparkling: is *brillante* and *pétillante*, rather than lucent and illuminating. How inferior, for *seeing* with, is your brightest train of fireworks to the humblest farthing candle! Who Diderot's companions, friends, enemies, patrons were, what his way of life was, what the Paris he lived in and from his garret looked down on was, we learn only in hints, dislocated, enigmatic. It is in general to be impressed on us, that young Denis, as a sort of spiritual swashbuckler, who went about conquering Destiny, in light rapier-fence, by way of amusement; or at lowest, in reverses, gracefully insulting her with mock reverences,—lived and acted like no other man; all which being freely admitted, we ask, with small increase of knowledge, How did he act, then?

He gave lessons in Mathematics, we find; but with the princeliest indifference as to payment: 'was his scholar lively, 'and prompt of conception, he sat by him teaching all day; 'did he chance on a blockhead, he returned not back. They 'paid him in books, in movables, in linen, in money, or not at 'all; it was quite the same.' Farther, he made Sermons to order; as the Devil is said to quote Scripture: a Missionary bespoke half-a-dozen of him (of Denis, that is) for the Portuguese Colonies, and paid for them very handsomely at fifty crowns each. Once a family Tutorship came in his way, with tolerable appointments, but likewise with incessant duties: at the end of three months, he waits upon the house-father with this abrupt communication: "I am come, Monsieur, to request you to seek a new tutor; I cannot remain with you any longer."

—"But, Monsieur Diderot, what is your grievance? Have you too little salary? I will double it. Are you ill-lodged? Choose your apartment. Is your table ill-served? Order your own dinner. All will be cheap to parting with you."—"Monsieur, look at me: a citron is not so yellow as my face. I am making men of your children; but every day I am becoming a child with them. I feel a hundred times too rich and too well off in your house; yet I must leave it: the object of my wishes is not to live better, but to keep from dying."

Mademoiselle grants that, if sometimes 'drunk with gaiety,' he was often enough plunged in bitterness; but then a Newtonian problem, a fine thought, or any small godsend of that sort, would instantly cheer him again. The 'gold-mines' had not yet come to light. Meanwhile, between him and starvation we can still discern Langres covertly stretching out its hand. Of any Langres man, coming in his way, Denis frankly borrows; and the good old Father refuses not to pay. The Mother is still kinder, at least softer: she sends him direct help, as she can; not by the post, but by a serving-maid, who travelled these sixty leagues on foot; delivered him a small sum from his mother; and, without mentioning it, added all her own savings thereto. This Samaritan journey she performed three times. 'I saw her some years ago,' adds Mademoiselle; 'she 'spoke of my father with tears; her whole desire was to see 'him again: sixty years' service had impaired neither her 'sense nor her sensibility.'

It is granted also that his company was 'sometimes good, sometimes indifferent, not to say bad.' Indeed, putting all things together, we can easily fancy that the last sort was the preponderating. It seems probable that Denis, during these ten years of probation, walked chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom; now swilling from full Circe-goblets, now snuffing with haggard expectancy the hungry wind; always 'sorely flamed-on from the neighbouring hell.' In some of his fictitious writings, a most intimate acquaintance with the nether world of Polissons, Escrocs, Filles de Joie, Maroufles, Maquerelles, and their ways of doing, comes to light: among other things (as may be seen in *Jacques le Fataliste*, and elsewhere), a singular theoretic expertness in what is technically named 'raising the wind;' which miracle, indeed, Denis himself is

expressly (in this *Mémoire*) found once performing, and in a style to require legal cognisance, had not the worthy Father 'sneered at the dupe, and paid.' The dupe here was a proselytising Abbé, whom the dog glozed with professions of life-weariness and turning monk; which all evaporated, once the money was in his hands. On other occasions, it might turn out otherwise, and the gudgeon-fisher hook some shark of prey.

Literature, except in the way of Sermons for the Portuguese Colonies, or other the like small private dealings, had not yet opened her hospitable bosom to him. Epistles, precatory and amatory, for such as had more cash than grammar, he may have written; Catalogues also, Indexes, Advertisements, and, in these latter cases, even seen himself in print. But now he ventures forward, with bolder step, towards the interior mysteries, and begins producing Translations from the English. Literature, it is true, was then, as now, the universal free-hospital and Refuge for the Destitute, where all mortals, of what colour and kind soever, had liberty to live, or at least to die: nevertheless, for an enterprising man its resources at that time were comparatively limited. Newspapers were few; Reporting existed not, still less the inferior branches, with their fixed rate per line: Packwood and Warren, much more Panckouke and Colburn, as yet slumbered (the last century of their slumber) in the womb of Chaos; Fragmentary Panegyric-literature had not yet come into being, therefore could not be paid for. Talent wanted a free staple and workshop, where wages might be certain; and too often, like virtue, was praised and left starving. Lest the reader overrate the munificence of the literary cornucopia in France at this epoch, let us lead him into a small historical scene, that he may see with his own eyes. Diderot is the historian; the date too is many years later, when times, if anything, were mended:

'I had given a poor devil a manuscript to copy. The time he had promised it at having expired, and my man not appearing, I grow uneasy; set off to hunt him out. I find him in a hole the size of my hand, almost without daylight, not the wretchedest tatter of serge to cover his walls; two straw-bottom chairs, a flock-bed, the coverlet chiselled with worms, without curtains; a trunk in a corner of the chimney, rags of all sorts hooked above it; a little white-iron lamp, with a bottle for pediment to it; on a deal shelf, a dozen of excellent books. I chatted

with him three quarters of an hour. My gentleman was naked as a worm' (*nu comme un ver:* it was August); 'lean, dingy, dry, yet serene, complaining of nothing, eating his junk of bread with appetite, and from time to time caressing his beloved, who reclined on that miserable truckle, taking-up two-thirds of the room. If I had not known that happiness resides in the soul, my Epictetus of the Rue Hyacinthe might have taught it me.'

Notwithstanding all which, Denis, now in his twenty-ninth year, sees himself necessitated to fall desperately and over head and ears in love. It was a virtuous, pure attachment; his first of that sort, probably also his last. Readers who would see the business poetically delineated, and what talent Diderot had for such delineations, may read this scene in the once-noted Drama of the *Père de Famille*. It is known that he drew from the life; and with few embellishments, which too, except in the French Theatre, do not beautify.

'ACT I. SCENE 7.

Saint-Albin. Father, you shall know all. Alas, how else can I move you?—The first time I ever saw her was at church. She was on her knees at the foot of the altar, beside an aged woman, whom I took for her mother. Ah, father! what modesty, what charms! . . . . Her image followed me by day, haunted me by night, left me rest nowhere. I lost my cheerfulness, my health, my peace. I could not live without seeking to find her. . . . . She has changed me; I am no longer what I was. From the first moment all shameful desires fade away from my soul; respect and admiration succeed them. Without rebuke or restraint on her part, perhaps before she had raised her eyes on me, I became timid; more so from day to day; and soon I felt as little free to attempt her virtue as her life.

The Father. And who are these women? How do they live?

Saint-Albin. Ah! if you knew it, unhappy as they are! Imagine that their toil begins before day, and often they have to continue it through the night. The mother spins on the wheel; hard coarse cloth is between the soft small fingers of Sophie, and wounds them.[2] Her eyes, the brightest eyes in this world, are worn at the light of a lamp. She lives in a garret, within four bare walls; a wooden table, a couple of chairs, a truckle-bed, that is their furniture. O Heavens, when ye fashioned such a creature, was this the lot ye destined her?

The Father. And how got you access? Speak me truth.

[2] The real trade appears to have been a 'sempstress one in laces and linens:' the poverty is somewhat exaggerated; otherwise the shadow may be faithful enough.

Saint-Albin. It is incredible what obstacles I had, what I surmounted. Though now lodged there, under the same roof, I at first did not seek to see them: if we met on the stairs, coming up, going down, I saluted them respectfully. At night, when I came home (for all day I was supposed to be at my work), I would go knock gently at their door; ask them for the little services usual among neighbours,—as water, fire, light. By degrees they grew accustomed to me; rather took to me. I offered to serve them in little things; for instance, they disliked going out at night; I fetched and carried for them.'

The real truth here is, "I ordered a set of shirts from them; said I was a Church-licentiate just bound for the Seminary of St. Nicholas,—and, above all, had the tongue of the old serpent." But to skip much, and finish:

'Yesterday I came as usual: Sophie was alone; she was sitting with her elbows on the table, her head leant on her hand; her work had fallen at her feet. I entered without her hearing me: she sighed. Tears escaped from between her fingers, and ran along her arms. For some time, of late, I had seen her sad. Why was she weeping? What was it that grieved her? Want it could no longer be; her labour and my attentions provided against that. Threatened by the only misfortune terrible to me, I did not hesitate: I threw myself at her knees. What was her surprise! Sophie, said I, you weep; what ails you? Do not hide your trouble from me: speak to me; O, speak to me! She spoke not. Her tears continued flowing. Her eyes, where calmness no longer dwelt, but tears and anxiety, bent towards me, then turned away, then turned to me again. She said only, Poor Sergi! unhappy Sophie! —I had laid my face on her knees; I was wetting her apron with my tears.'

In a word, there is nothing for it but marriage. Old Diderot, joyous as he was to see his Son once more, started back in indignation and derision from such a proposal; and young Diderot had to return to Paris, and be forbid the beloved house, and fall sick, and come to the point of death, before the fair one's scruples could be subdued. However, she sent to get news of him; 'learnt that his room was a perfect dog-kennel, that he 'lay without nourishment, without attendance, wasted, sad: 'thereupon she took her resolution; mounted to him, promised 'to be his wife; and mother and daughter now became his 'nurses. So soon as he recovered, they went to Saint-Pierre, 'and were married at midnight (1744).' It only remains to add, that if the Sophie whom he had wedded fell much short

of this Sophie whom he delineates, the fault was less in her qualities than in his own unstable fancy: as in youth she was 'tall, beautiful, pious and wise,' so through a long life she seems to have approved herself a woman of courage, discretion, faithful affection; far too good a wife for such a husband.

'My father was of too jealous a character to let my mother continue a traffic, which obliged her to receive strangers and treat with them: he begged her therefore to give-up that business; she was very loath to consent; poverty did not alarm her on her own account, but her mother was old, unlikely to remain with her long; and the fear of not being able to provide for all her wants was afflicting: nevertheless, persuading herself that this sacrifice was for her husband's happiness, she made it. A char-woman looked-in daily, to sweep their little lodging, and fetch provisions for the day; my mother managed all the rest. Often when my father dined or supped out, she would dine or sup on bread; and took a great pleasure in the thought that, next day, she could double her little ordinary for him. Coffee was too considerable a luxury for a household of this sort: but she could not think of his wanting it, and every day gave him six sous to go and have his cup, at the Café de la Régence, and see the chess-playing there.

'It was now that he translated the *History of Greece* in three volumes' (by the English Stanyan); 'he sold it for a hundred crowns. This sum brought a sort of supply into the house. * * *

'My mother had been brought to bed of a daughter: she was now big a second time. In spite of her precautions, solitary life, and the pains she had taken to pass-off her husband as her brother, his family, in the seclusion of their province, learnt that he was living with two women. Directly, the birth, the morals, the character of my mother became objects of the blackest calumny. He foresaw that discussions by letter would be endless; he found it simpler to put his wife into the stage-coach, and send her to his parents. She had just been delivered of a son; he announced this event to his father, and the departure of my mother. "She set out yesterday," said he; "she will be with you in three days. You will say to her what shall please you, and send her back when you are tired of her." Singular as this sort of explanation was, they determined, in any case, on sending my father's sister to receive her. Their first welcome was more than cold: the evening grew less painful to her; but next morning betimes she went in to her father-in-law; treated him as if he had been her own father; her respect and her caresses charmed the good, sensible old man. Coming down stairs, she began working: refused nothing that could please a family whom she was not afraid of, and wished to be loved by. Her conduct was the only excuse she gave for her husband's choice: her appearance had prepossessed them in her favour; her simplicity, her piety, her talents for household economy secured her their tenderness; they promised her

that my father's disinheritment should be revoked. They kept her three months; and sent her back loaded with whatever they could think would be useful or agreeable to her.'

All this is beautiful, told with a graceful simplicity; the beautiful, real-ideal, prose-idyl of a Literary Life: but, alas, in the music of your prose-idyl there lurks ever an accursed dissonance (or the players make one); where men are, there will be mischief. 'This journey,' writes Mademoiselle, 'cost my mother many tears.' What will the reader say when he finds that Monsieur Diderot has, in the interim, taken up with a certain Madame de Puisieux; and welcomes his brave Wife (worthy to have been a true man's) with a heart and bosom henceforth estranged from her! Madame Diderot 'made two journeys to Langres, and both were fatal to her peace.' This affair of the Puisieux, for whom he despicably enough not only burned, but toiled and made money, kept him busy for some ten years; till at length, finding that she played false, he gave her up; and minor miscellaneous flirtations seem to have succeeded. But, returning from her *second* journey, the much-enduring Housemother finds him in meridian glory with one Voland, the *un*-maiden Daughter of a 'Financier's Widow;' to whom we owe this present preternuptial *Correspondance;* to whom indeed he mainly devoted himself for the rest of his life,—'parting his time between his study and her;' to his own wife and household giving little save the trouble of cooking for him, and of painfully, with repressed or irrepressible discontent, keeping up some appearance of terms with him. Alas! alas! and his Puisieux seems to have been a hollow mercenary (to whose scandalous soul he reckons obscenest of Books fit nutriment); and the Voland an elderly spinster, with *cœur sensible, cœur honnête, âme tendre et bonne!* And then those old dinings on bread; the six sous spared for his cup of coffee! Foolish Diderot, scarcely pardonable Diderot! A hard saying is this, yet a true one: Scoundrelism signifies injustice, and should be left to scoundrels alone. For thy wronged wife, whom thou hadst sworn far other things to, ever in her afflictions (here so hostilely scanned and written of) a true sympathy will awaken; and sorrow that the patient, or even impatient, endurances of such a woman should be matter of speculation and self-gratulation to such another.

But looking out of doors now, from an indifferently-guided Household, which must have fallen shamefully in pieces, had not a wife been wiser and stronger than her husband,—we find the Philosophe making distinct way with the Bibliopolic world; and likely, in the end, to pick up a kind of living there. The Stanyan's *History of Greece;* the other English-translated, nameless *Medical Dictionary*, are dropped by all editors as worthless: a like fate might, with little damage, have overtaken the *Essai sur le Mérite et la Vertu*, rendered or redacted out of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*. In which redaction, with its Notes, of anxious Orthodoxy, and bottomless Falsehood looking through it, we individually have found nothing, save a confirmation of the old twice-repeated experience, That in Shaftesbury's famed Book there lay, if any meaning, a meaning of such long-windedness, circumvolution and lubricity, that, like an eel, it must forever slip through our fingers, and leave us alone among the gravel. One reason may partly be, that Shaftesbury was not only a Sceptic but an Amateur Sceptic; which sort a darker, more earnest, have long since swallowed and abolished. The meaning of a delicate, perfumed, gentlemanly individual standing there, in that war of Titans (hill meeting hill with all its woods), and putting out hand to it—with a pair of tweezers?

However, our Denis has now emerged from the intermediate Hades of Translatorship into the Heaven of perfected Authorship: empties his commonplace book of *Pensées Philosophiques* (it is said in the space of four days); writes his Metaphysico-Baconian phantasmagories on the *Interprétation de la Nature* (an endless business to 'interpret'); and casts the money-produce of both into the lap of his Scarlet-woman Puisieux. Then forthwith, for the same object, in a shameful fortnight, puts together the beastliest of all past, present or future dull Novels; a difficult feat, unhappily not an impossible one. If any mortal creature, even a Reviewer, be again compelled to glance into that Book, let him bathe himself in running water, put on change of raiment, and be unclean until the even. As yet the Metaphysico-Atheistic *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* and *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, which brings glory and a three-months lodging in the Castle of Vincennes, are at years' distance in the background. But already by his gilded tongue, growing repute and sanguine projecting temper, he has persuaded Booksellers

to pay-off the Abbé Gua, with his lean Version of *Chambers's Dictionary of Arts*, and convert it into an *Encyclopédie*, with himself and D'Alembert for Editors: and is henceforth (from the year of grace 1751) a duly dis-indentured *Man of Letters*, an indisputable and more and more conspicuous member of that surprising guild.

Literature, ever since its appearance in our European world, especially since it emerged out of Cloisters into the open Market-place, and endeavoured to make itself room, and gain a subsistence there, has offered the strangest phases, and consciously or unconsciously done the strangest work. Wonderful Ark of the Deluge, where so much that is precious, nay priceless to mankind, floats carelessly onwards through the Chaos of distracted Times,—if so be it may one day find an Ararat to rest on, and see the waters abate! The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, is our proper Church History; the other Church, during that time, having more and more decayed from its old functions and influence, and ceased to have a history. And now, to look only at the outside of the matter, think of the Tassos and older or later Racines, struggling to raise their office from its pristine abasement of court-jester; and teach and elevate the World, in conjunction with that other quite heteroclite task of solacing and glorifying some *Pullus Jovis*, in plush cloak and other gilt or golden king-tackle, that they in the interim might live thereby! Consider the Shakspeares and Molières, plying a like trade, but on a double material; glad of any royal or noble patronage, but eliciting, as their surer stay, some fractional contribution from the thick-skinned, many-pocketed million. Saumaises, now bully-fighting 'for a hundred gold Jacobuses,' now closeted with Queen Christinas, who blow the fire with their own queenly mouth, to make a pedant's breakfast; anon cast forth (being scouted and confuted), and dying of heartbreak, coupled with henpeck. Then the Laws of Copyright, the Quarrels of Authors, the Calamities of Authors; the Heynes dining on boiled peascods, the Jean Pauls on water; the Johnsons bedded and boarded on fourpence-halfpenny a-day. Lastly, the unutterable confusion worse confounded of our present Periodical existence; when, among other phenomena, a young Fourth Estate (whom all the three elder may try if they can hold) is seen sprawling and stagger-

ing tumultuously through the world; as yet but a huge, raw-boned, lean *calf;* fast growing, however, to be a Pharaoh's lean cow,—of whom let the fat kine beware!

All this, of the mere exterior, or dwelling-place of Literature, not yet glancing at the internal, at the Doctrines emitted or striven after, will the future Eusebius and Mosheim have to record; and (in some small degree) explain to us what it means. Unfathomable is its meaning: Life, mankind's Life, ever from its unfathomable fountains, rolls wondrous on, another though the same; in Literature too, the seeing eye will distinguish Apostles of the Gentiles, Proto- and Duetero-martyrs; still less will the Simon Magus, or Apollonius with the golden thigh, be wanting. But all now is on an infinitely *wider scale;* the elements of it all swim far-scattered, and still only striving towards union;—whereby, indeed, it happens that to the most, under this new figure, they are unrecognisable.

French Literature, in Diderot's time, presents itself in a certain state of culmination, where causes long prepared are rapidly becoming effects; and was doubtless in one of its more notable epochs. Under the Economic aspect, in France, as in England, this was the Age of Booksellers; when, as a Dodsley and Miller could risk capital in an *English Dictionary*, a Lebreton and Briasson could become purveyors and commissariat-officers for a French *Encyclopédie*. The world forever loves Knowledge, and would part with its last sixpence in payment thereof: this your Dodsleys and Lebretons well saw; moreover they could act on it, for as yet PUFFERY was not. Alas, offences must come; Puffery from the first was inevitable: woe to them, nevertheless, by whom it did come! Meanwhile, as we said, it slept in Chaos; the Word of man and tradesman was still partially credible to man. Booksellers were therefore a possible, were even a necessary class of mortals, though a strangely anomalous one; had they kept from lying, or lied with any sort of moderation, the anomaly might have lasted still longer. For the present, they managed in Paris as elsewhere: the Timber-headed could perceive that for Thought the world would give money; farther, by mere shopkeeper cunning, that true Thought, as in the end sure to be recognised, and by nature infinitely more durable, was better to deal in than false; farther,

by credible tradition of public consent, that such and such had the talent of furnishing true Thought (say rather *truer*, as the more correct word): on this hint the Timber-headed spake and bargained. Nay, let us say he bargained, and worked, for most part with industrious assiduity, with patience, suitable prudence; nay sometimes with touches of generosity and magnanimity, beautifully irradiating the circumambient mass of greed and dulness. For the rest, the two high contracting parties roughed it out as they could; so that if Booksellers, in their back-parlour Valhalla, drank wine out of the skulls of Authors (as they were fabled to do), Authors, in the front-apartments, from time to time, gave them a Roland for their Oliver: a Johnson can knock his Osborne on the head, like any other Bull of Bashan; a Diderot commands his corpulent Panckouke to "Leave the room, and go to the devil; *Allez au diable, sortez de chez moi!*"

Under the internal or Doctrinal aspect, again, French Literature, we can see, knew far better what it was about than English. That fable, indeed, first set afloat by some Trevoux Journalist of the period, and which has floated foolishly enough into every European ear since then, of there being an Association specially organised for the destruction of government, religion, society, civility (not to speak of tithes, rents, life and property), all over the world; which hell-serving Association met at the Baron d'Holbach's, there had its blue-light sederunts, and published Transactions legible to all,—was and remains nothing but a fable. Minute-books, president's hammer, ballot-box, punch-bowl of such Pandemonium have not been produced to the world. The sect of Philosophes existed at Paris, but as other sects do; held together by loosest, informal, unrecognised ties; within which every one, no doubt, followed his own natural objects, of proselytism, of glory, of getting a livelihood. Meanwhile, whether in constituted association or not, French Philosophy resided in the persons of the French Philosophes; and, as a mighty deep-struggling Force, was at work there. Deep-struggling, irrepressible; the subterranean fire, which long heaved unquietly, and shook all things with an ominous motion, was here, we can say, forming itself a decided spiracle;—which, by and by, as French Revolution, became that volcano-crater, world-famous, world-appalling, world-mad-

dening, as yet very far from closed! Fontenelle said, he wished he could live sixty years longer, and see what that universal infidelity, depravity and dissolution of all ties would turn to. In threescore years Fontenelle might have seen strange things; but not the end of the phenomenon perhaps in three hundred.

Why France became such a volcano-crater, what specialties there were in the French national character, and political, moral, intellectual condition, by virtue whereof French Philosophy there and not elsewhere, then and not sooner or later, evolved itself,—is an inquiry that has been often put, and cheerfully answered; the true answer of which might lead us far. Still deeper than this *Whence* were the question of *Whither;*—with which, also, we intermeddle not here. Enough for us to understand that there verily a Scene of Universal History is being enacted, a little living TIME-picture in the bosom of ETERNITY;—and, with the feeling due in that case, to ask not so much Why it is, as What it is. Leaving priorities and posteriorities aside, and cause-and-effect to adjust itself elsewhere, conceive so many vivid spirits thrown together into the Europe, into the Paris of that day, and see how they demean themselves, what they work-out and attain there.

As the *mystical* enjoyment of an object goes infinitely farther than the *intellectual*, and we can *look* at a picture with delight and profit, after all that we can be *taught* about it is grown poor and wearisome; so here, and by far stronger reason, these light Letters of Diderot to the Voland, again unveiling and *showing* Parisian Life, are worth more to us than many a heavy tome laboriously struggling to explain it. True, we have seen the picture, that same Parisian life-picture, ten times already; but we can look at it an eleventh time: nay this, as we said, is not a canvas-picture, but a life-picture, of whose significance there is no end for us. Grudge not the elderly Spinster her existence, then; say not she has lived in vain. For what of History there is in this Preternuptial Correspondence should we not endeavour to forgive and forget all else, the *sensibilité* itself? The curtain which had fallen for almost a century is again drawn up; the scene is alive and busy. Figures grown historical are here seen face to face, and live before us.

A strange theatre that of French Philosophism; a strange dramatic corps! Such another corps for brilliancy and levity,

for gifts and vices, and all manner of sparkling inconsistencies, the world is not like to see again. There is Patriarch Voltaire, of all Frenchmen the most French; he whom the French had, as it were, long waited for, 'to produce at once, in a single life, all that French genius most prized and most excelled in;' of him and his wondrous ways, as of one known, we need say little. Instant enough to 'crush the Abomination, *écraser l'Infâme*,' he has prosecuted his Jesuit-hunt over many lands and many centuries, in many ways, with an alacrity that has made him dangerous, and endangered him: he now sits at Ferney, withdrawn from the active toils of the chase; cheers-on his hunting-dogs mostly from afar: Diderot, a beagle of the first vehemence, he has rather to restrain. That all extant and possible Theology be abolished, will not content the fell Denis, as surely it might have done; the Patriarch has to address him a friendly admonition on his Atheism, and make him eat it again.

D'Alembert, too, we may consider as one known; of all the Philosophe fraternity, him who in speech and conduct agrees best with our English notions: an independent, patient, prudent man; of great faculty, especially of great clearness and method; famous in Mathematics; no less so, to the wonder of some, in the intellectual provinces of Literature. A foolish wonder; as if the Thinker could think only on one thing, and not on *any* thing he had a call towards. D'Alembert's *Mélanges*, as the impress of a genuine spirit, in peculiar position and probation, have still instruction for us, both of head and heart. The man lives retired here, in questionable seclusion with his Espinasse; incurs the suspicion of apostasy, because in the *Encyclopédie* he saw no Evangel and celestial Revelation, but only a huge Folio Dictionary; and would not venture life and limb on it without a 'consideration.' Sad was it to Diderot to see his fellow-voyager make for port, and disregard signals, when the sea-krakens rose round him! They did not quarrel; were always friendly when they met, but latterly met only at the rate of 'once in the two years.' D'Alembert died when Diderot was on his deathbed: "My friend," said the latter to the news-bringer, "a great light is gone out."

Hovering in the distance, with wostruck, minatory air, stern-beckoning, comes Rousseau. Poor Jean Jacques! Alternately deified, and cast to the dogs; a deep-minded, high-minded,

even noble, yet wofully misarranged mortal, with all misformations of Nature intensated to the verge of madness by unfavourable Fortune. A lonely man; his life a long soliloquy! The wandering Tiresias of the time;—in whom, however, did lie prophetic meaning, such as none of the others offer. Whereby indeed it might partly be that the world went to such extremes about him; that, long after his departure, we have seen one whole nation worship him, and a Burke, in the name of another, class him with the offscourings of the earth. His true character, with its lofty aspirings and poor performings; and how the spirit of the man worked so wildly, like celestial fire in a thick dark element of chaos, and shot-forth ethereal radiance, all-piercing lightning, yet could not illuminate, was quenched and did not conquer: this, with what lies in it, may now be pretty accurately appreciated. Let his history teach all whom it concerns, to '*harden* themselves against the ills which Mother Nature will try them with;' to seek within their own soul what the world must forever deny them; and say composedly to the Prince of the Power of this lower Earth and Air: Go thou thy way; I go mine!

Rousseau and Diderot were early friends: who has forgotten how Jean Jacques walked to the Castle of Vincennes, where Denis (for heretical Metaphysics, and irreverence to the Strumpetocracy) languishes in durance; and devised his first Literary Paradox on the road thither? Their Quarrel, which, as a fashionable hero of the time complains, occupied all Paris, is likewise famous enough. The reader recollects that heroical epistle of Diderot to Grimm on that occasion, and the sentence: 'O, my 'friend, let us continue virtuous; for the state of those who 'have ceased to be so makes me shudder.' But is the reader aware what the fault of him 'who has ceased to be so' was! A series of ravelments and squabbling grudges, 'which,' says Mademoiselle with much simplicity, 'the Devil himself could not understand.' Alas, the Devil well understood it, and Tyrant Grimm too did, who had the ear of Diderot, and poured into it his own unjust, almost abominable spleen. Clean paper need not be soiled with a foul story, where the main actor is only 'Tyran le Blanc;' enough to know that the continually virtuous Tyrant found Diderot 'extremely impressionable;' so poor Jean Jacques must go his ways (with both the scath and the

scorn), and among his many woes bear this also. Diderot is not blamable ; pitiable rather ; for who would be a pipe, which not Fortune only, but any Sycophant may play tunes on ?

Of this same Tyrant Grimm, desiring to speak peaceably, we shall say little, The man himself is less remarkable than his fortune. Changed times indeed, since the threadbare German Bursch quitted Ratisbon, with the sound of catcalls in his ears, the condemned 'Tragedy, *Banise*,' in his pocket ; and fled southward, on a thin travelling-tutorship ;—since Rousseau met you, Herr Grimm, 'a young man described as seeking a situation, and whose appearance indicated the pressing necessity 'he was in of soon finding one !' Of a truth, you have flourished since then, Herr Grimm : his introductions of you to Diderot, to Holbach, to the black-locked D'Epinay, where not only you are wormed-in, but he is wormed-out, have turned to somewhat ; the Threadbare has become well-napped, and got ruffles and jewel-rings, and walks abroad in sword and bagwig, and lacquers his brass countenance with rouge, and so (as *Tyran le Blanc*) recommends himself to the fair ; and writes Parisian Philosophe-gossip to the Hyperborean Kings, and his 'Grimm's Leaves,' copied 'to the number of twenty,' are bread of life to many ; and cringes here, and domineers there ; and lives at his ease in the Creation, in an effective *tendresse* with the D'Epinay, husband or custom of the country not objecting !—Poor Börne, the new German Flying-Sansculotte, feels his mouth water, at Paris, over these fleshpots of Grimm : reflecting with what heart he too could write 'Leaves,' and be fed thereby. Börne, my friend, those days are done ! While Northern Courts were a 'Lunar Versailles,' it was well to have an Uriel stationed in their Sun there ; but of all spots in this Universe (hardly excepting Tophet) Paris now is the one we at court could best *dispense* with news from ; never more, in these centuries, will a Grimm be missioned thither ; never a 'Leaf of Börne' be blown court-wards by any wind. As for the Grimm, we can see that he was a man made to rise in the world : a fair, even handsome outfit of talent, wholly marketable ; skill in music, and the like, encyclopedical readiness in all ephemera ; saloon-wit, a trenchant, unhesitating head ; above all, a heart ever in the right place,—in the market-place, namely, and marked 'for sale to the highest bidder.' Really a methodical, adroit, man-

aging man. By 'hero-worship,' and the cunning appliance of alternate sweet and sullen, he has brought Diderot to be his patient milk-cow, whom he can milk an Essay from, a Volume from, when he lists. Victorious Grimm! He even escaped those same 'horrors of the French Revolution' (with loss of his ruffles); and was seen at the Court of Gotha, sleek and well to live, within the memory of man.

The world has heard of M. le Chevalier de Saint-Lambert; considerable in Literature, in Love and War. He is here again, singing the frostiest Pastorals; happily, however, only in the distance, and the jingle of his wires soon dies away. Of another Chevalier, worthy Jaucourt, be the name mentioned, and little more: he digs unweariedly, molewise, in the Encyclopedic field, catching what he can, and shuns the light. Then there is Helvetius, the well-fed Farmer-general, enlivening his sybaritic life with metaphysic paradoxes. His revelations *De l'Homme* and *De l'Esprit* breathe the freest Philosophe-spirit, with Philanthropy and Sensibility enough: the greater is our astonishment to find him here so ardent a Preserver of the Game:

'This Madame de Nocé,' writes Diderot, treating of the Bourbonne Hot-springs, 'is a neighbour of Helvetius. She told us, the Philosopher was the unhappiest man in the world on his estates. He is surrounded there by neighbours and peasants who detest him. They break the windows of his mansion, plunder his grounds by night, cut his trees, throw down his walls, tear-up his spiked paling. He dare not go to shoot a hare, without a train of people to guard him. You will ask me, How it has come to pass? By a boundless zeal for his game. M. Fagon, his predecessor, used to guard the grounds with two keepers and two guns. Helvetius has twenty-four, and cannot do it. These men have a small premium for every poacher they can catch; and there is no sort of mischief they will not cause to get more and more of these. Besides, they are themselves so many hired poachers. Again, the border of his woods was inhabited by a set of poor people, who had got huts there; he has caused all the huts to be swept away. It is these, and such acts of repeated tyranny, that have raised him enemies of all kinds; and the more insolent, says Madame de Nocé, as they have discovered that the worthy Philosopher is a coward. I would not have his fine estate of Voré as a present, had I to live there in these perpetual alarms. What profits he draws from that mode of management I know not: but he is alone there; he is hated, he is in fear. Ah! how much wiser was our lady Geoffrin; when speaking of a lawsuit that tormented her, she said to me, "Get done with my

lawsuit; they want money? I have it. Give them money. What better use can I make of my money than to buy peace with it?" In Helvetius's place, I would have said, "They kill me a few hares and rabbits; let them be doing. These poor creatures have no shelter but my forest; let them stay there." I should have reasoned like M. Fagon, and been adored like him.'

Alas! are not Helvetius's preserves, at this hour, all broken up, and lying desecrated? Neither can the others, in what latitude and longitude soever, remain eternally impregnable. But if a Rome was once saved by geese, need we wonder that an England is lost by partridges? We are sons of Eve, who bartered Paradise for an apple.

But to return to Paris and its Philosophe Church-militant. Here is a Marmontel, an active subaltern thereof, who fights in a small way, through the *Mercure;* and, in rose-pink romance-pictures, strives to celebrate the 'moral sublime.' An Abbé Morellet, busy with the Corn-Laws, walks in at intervals, stooping, shrunk together, 'as if to get nearer himself, *pour être plus près de lui-même.*' The rogue Galiani alternates between Naples and Paris; Galiani, by good luck, has 'forever *settled* the question of the Corn-Laws:' an idle fellow otherwise; a spiritual Lazzarone; full of frolics, wanton quips, anti-jesuit *gesta*, and wild Italian humour; the sight of his swart, sharp face is the signal for Laughter,—in which, indeed, the Man himself has unhappily evaporated, leaving no result behind him.

Of the Baron d'Holbach thus much may be said, that both at Paris and at Grandval he gives good dinners. His two or three score volumes of Atheistic Philosophism, which he published (at his own expense), may now be forgotten and even forgiven. A purse open and deep, a heart kindly-disposed, quiet, sociable, or even friendly; these, with excellent wines, gain him a literary elevation, which no thinking faculty he had could have pretended to. An easy, laconic gentleman; of grave politeness; apt to lose temper at play; yet, on the whole, good-humoured, eupeptic and eupractic: there may he live, and let live.

Nor is heaven's last gift to man wanting here; the natural sovereignty of women. Your Châtelets, Epinays, Espinasses, Geoffrins, Deffands, will play their part too: there shall, in all senses, be not only Philosophers, but Philosophesses. Strange

enough is the figure these women make: good souls, it was a strange world for them. What with metaphysics and flirtation, system of nature, fashion of dress-caps, vanity, curiosity, jealousy, atheism, rheumatism, *traités*, *bouts-rimés*, noble-sentiments, and rouge-pots,—the vehement female intellect sees itself sailing on a chaos, where a wiser might have wavered, if not foundered. For the rest (as an accurate observer has remarked), they become a sort of Lady-Presidents in that society; attain great influence; and, imparting as well as receiving, communicate to all that is done or said somewhat of their own peculiar tone.

In a world so wide and multifarious, this little band of Philosophes, acting and speaking as they did, had a most various reception to expect; votes divided to the uttermost. The mass of mankind, busy enough with their own work, of course heeded them only when forced to do it; these, meanwhile, form the great neutral element, in which the battle has to fight itself; the two hosts, according to their several success, to recruit themselves. Of the Higher Classes, it appears, the small proportion not wholly occupied in eating and dressing, and therefore open to such a question, are in their favour,—strange as to us it may seem; the spectacle of a Church pulled down is, in stagnant times, amusing; nor do the generality, on either side, yet see whither ulteriorly it is tending. The Reading World, which was then more than now the intelligent, inquiring world, reads eagerly (as it will ever do) whatsoever skilful, sprightly, reasonable-looking word is written for it; enjoying, appropriating the same; perhaps without fixed judgment, or deep care of any kind. Careful enough, fixed enough, on the other hand, is the Jesuit Brotherhood; in these days sick unto death; but only the bitterer and angrier for that. Dangerous are the death-convulsions of an expiring Sorbonne, ever and anon filling Paris with agitation: it behoves your Philosophe to walk warily, and in many a critical circumstance, to weep with the one cheek, and smile with the other.

Nor is Literature itself wholly Philosophe: apart from the Jesuit regulars, in their Trevoux Journals, Sermons, Episcopal Charges, and other camps or casemates, a considerable Guerrilla or Reviewer force (consisting, as usual, of smugglers, un-

employed destitute persons, deserters who have been refused promotion, and other the like broken characters) has organised itself, and maintains a harassing bush-warfare: of these the chieftain is Fréron, once in tolerable repute with the world, had he not, carrying too high a head, struck his foot on stones, and stumbled. By the continual depreciating of talent grown at length undeniable, he has sunk low enough: Voltaire, in the *Ecossaise*, can bring him on the stage, and have him killed by laughter, under the name, sufficiently recognisable, of *Wasp* (in French, *Frelon*). Another Empecedor, still more hateful, is Palissot, who has written and got acted a Comedy of *Les Philosophes*, at which the Parisians, spite of its dulness, have also laughed. To laugh at *us*, the so meritorious us! Heard mankind ever the like? For poor Palissot, had he fallen into Philosophe hands, serious bodily tar-and-feathering might have been apprehended: as it was, they do what the pen, with its gall and copperas, can; invoke Heaven and Earth to witness the treatment of Divine Philosophy;—with which view, in particular, friend Diderot seems to have composed his *Rameau's Nephew*, wherein Palissot and others of his kidney are (figuratively speaking) mauled and mangled, and left not in dog's likeness. So divided was the world, Literary, Courtly, Miscellaneous, on this matter: it was a confused anomalous time.

Among its more notable anomalies may be reckoned the relations of French Philosophism to Foreign Crowned Heads. In Prussia there is a Philosophe King; in Russia a Philosophe Empress: the whole North swarms with kinglets and queenlets of the like temper. Nay, as we have seen, they entertain their special ambassador in Philosophedom, their lion's-provider to furnish spiritual Philosophe-provender; and pay him well. The great Frederic, the great Catherine are as nursing-father and nursing-mother to this new Church of Antichrist; in all straits, ready with money, honourable royal asylum, help of every sort,—which, however, except in the money-shape, the wiser of our Philosophes are shy of receiving. Voltaire had tried it in the asylum-shape, and found it unsuitable; D'Alembert and Diderot decline repeating the experiment. What miracles are wrought by the arch-magician Time! Could these Frederics, Catherines, Josephs, have looked forward some threescore years; and beheld the Holy Alliance in conference

at Laybach! But so goes the world: kings are not seraphic doctors, with gift of prescience, but only men, with common eyesight, participating in the influences of their generation: kings too, like all mortals, have a certain love of knowledge; still more infallibly, a certain desire of applause; a certain delight in mortifying one another. Thus what is persecuted here finds refuge there; and ever, one way or other, the New works itself out full-formed from under the Old; nay the Old, as in this instance, sits sedulously hatching a cockatrice that will one day devour it.

No less anomalous, confused and contradictory is the relation of the Philosophes to their own Government. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, their relation to Society being still so undecided; and the Government, which might have endeavoured to adjust and preside over this, being itself in a state of anomaly, death-lethargy and doting decrepitude? The true conduct and position for a French Sovereign towards French Literature, in that country might have been, though perhaps of all things the most important, one of the most difficult to discover and accomplish. What chance was there that a thick-blooded Louis Quinze, from his *Parc aux Cerfs*, should discover it, should have the faintest inkling of it? His 'peaceable soul' was quite otherwise employed: Minister after Minister must consult his own several insight, his own whim, above all his own ease: and so the whole business, now when we look on it, comes out one of the most botched, piebald, inconsistent, lamentable and even ludicrous objects in the history of State-craft. Alas, necessity has no *law:* the statesman, without light, perhaps even without eyes, whom Destiny nevertheless constrains to 'govern' his nation in a time of World-Downfall, what shall he do, but if so may be, collect the taxes; prevent in some degree murder and arson; and for the rest, wriggle hither and thither, return upon his steps, clout-up old rents and open new,—and, on the whole, eat his victuals, and let the Devil govern it? Of the pass to which Statesmanship had come in respect of Philosophism, let this one fact be evidence instead of a thousand. M. de Malesherbes writes to warn Diderot that, next day, he will give orders to have all his papers seized.—Impossible! answers Diderot: *juste ciel!* how shall I sort them, where shall I hide them, within four-

and-twenty hours? *Send them to me*, answers M. de Malesherbes! Thither accordingly they go, under lock and seal; and the hungry catchpoles find nothing but empty drawers.

The *Encyclopédie* was set forth first 'with approbation and *Privilége du Roi*;' next, it was stopped by Authority: next, the public murmuring, suffered to proceed; then again, positively for the last time, stopped,—and, no whit the less, printed, and written, and circulated, under thin disguises, some hundred and fifty printers working at it with open doors, all Paris knowing of it, only Authority winking hard. Choiseul, in his resolute way, had now shut the eyes of Authority, and kept them shut. Finally, to crown the whole matter, a copy of the prohibited Book lies in the King's private library: and owes favour, and a withdrawal of the prohibition, to the foolishest accident:

'One of Louis Fifteenth's domestics told me,' says Voltaire, 'that once, the King his master supping, in private circle (*en petite compagnie*), at Trianon, the conversation turned first on the chase, and from this on gunpowder. Some one said that the best powder was made of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, in equal parts. The Duc de la Vallière, with better knowledge, maintained that for good powder there must be one part of sulphur, one of charcoal, with five of saltpetre, well filtered, well evaporated, well crystallised.

'"It is pleasant," said the Duc de Nivernois, "that we who daily amuse ourselves with killing partridges in the Park of Versailles, and sometimes with killing men, or getting ourselves killed, on the frontiers, should not know what that same work of killing is done with."

'"Alas! we are in the like case with all things in this world," answered Madame de Pompadour: "I know not what the rouge I put upon my cheeks is made of; you would bring me to a nonplus, if you asked how the silk hose I wear are manufactured." "'Tis a pity," said the Duc de la Vallière, "that his Majesty confiscated our *Dictionnaires Encyclopédiques*, which cost us our hundred pistoles; we should soon find the decision of all our questions there." The King justified the act of confiscation; he had been informed that these twenty-one folio volumes, to be found lying on all ladies' toilettes, were the most pernicious things in the world for the kingdom of France; he had resolved to look for himself if this were true, before suffering the book to circulate. Towards the end of the repast, he sends three of his valets to bring him a copy; they enter, struggling under seven volumes each. The article *powder* is turned up; the Duc de la Vallière is found to be right: and soon Madame de Pompadour learns the difference between the old *rouge d'Espagne* with which the ladies of Madrid coloured their cheeks,

and the *rouge des dames* of Paris. She finds that the Greek and Roman ladies painted with a purple extracted from the *murex*, and that consequently our scarlet is the purple of the ancients; and that there is more purple in the *rouge d'Espagne*, and more cochineal in that of France. She learns how stockings are woven; the stocking-frame described there fills her with amazement. "Ah, what a glorious book!" cried she. "Sire, did you confiscate this magazine of all useful things, that you might have it wholly to yourself, then, and be the one learned man in your kingdom?" Each threw himself on the volumes, like the daughters of Lycomedes on the jewels of Ulysses; each found forthwith whatever he was seeking. Some who had lawsuits were surprised to see the decision of them there. The King reads there all the rights of his crown. "Well, in truth (*mais vraiment*)," said he, "I know not why they said so much ill of the book." "Ah, sire," said the Duc de Nivernois, "does not your Majesty see," &c. &c.'

In such a confused world, under such unheard-of circumstances, must friend Diderot ply his editorial labours. No sinecure is it! Penetrating into all subjects and sciences; waiting and rummaging in all libraries, laboratories; nay, for many years, fearlessly diving into all manner of workshops, unscrewing stocking-looms, and even working thereon (that the department of *Arts and Trades* might be perfect); then seeking out contributors, and flattering them, quickening their laziness, getting payment for them; quarrelling with Bookseller and Printer: bearing all miscalculations, misfortunes, misdoings of so many fallible men (for there all at last lands) on his single back: surely this was enough, without having farther to do battle with the beagles of Office, perilously withstand them, expensively sop them, toilsomely elude them! Nevertheless, he perseveres, and will not but persevere;—less, perhaps, with the deliberate courage of a Man, who has compared result and outlay, than with the passionate obstinacy of a Woman, who, having made-up her mind, will shrink at no ladder of ropes, but ride with her lover, though all the four Elements gainsay it. At every new concussion from the Powers, he roars; say rather shrieks, for there is a female shrillness in it; proclaiming, Murder! Robbery! Rape! invoking men and angels; meanwhile proceeds unweariedly with the printing. It is a hostile building-up, not of the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, but of the Unholy one at Paris: thus must Diderot, like Ezra, come to strange extremities; and every workman works

with his trowel in one hand, in the other his weapon of war; that so, in spite of all Tiglaths, the work go on, and the top-stone of it be brought out with shouting.

Shouting! Ah, what faint broken quaver is that in the shout; as of a man that shouted with the throat only, and inwardly was bowed down with dispiritment? It is Diderot's faint broken quaver; he is sick and heavy of soul. Scandalous enough: the Goth Lebreton, loving, as he says, his head better even than his profit, has for years gone privily at dead of night to the finished Encyclopedic proof-sheets, and there with nefarious pen scratched out whatever to *him* seemed dangerous; filling-up the gap as *he* could, or merely letting it fill itself up. Heaven and Earth! Not only are the finer Philosophe sallies mostly cut out,—but hereby has the work become a sunken, hitching, ungainly mass, little better than a monstrosity. Goth! Hun! sacrilegious Attila of the book-trade! O, surely for this treason the hottest of Dante's Purgatory were too temperate. Infamous art thou, Lebreton, to all ages—that read the *Encyclopédie;* and Philosophes not yet in swaddling-clothes shall gnash their teeth over thee, and spit upon thy memory.—Lebreton pockets both the abuse and the cash, and sleeps sound in a whole skin. The able Editor could never be said to get entirely the better of it while he lived.

Now, however, it is time that, quitting generalities, we go, in this fine autumn weather, to Holbach's at Grandval, where the hardworked but unwearied Encyclopedist, with plenty of ink and writing-paper, is sure to be. Ever in the Holbach household his arrival is a holyday; if a quarrel spring up, it is only because he will not come, or too soon goes away. A man of social talent, with such a tongue as Diderot's, in a mansion where the only want to be guarded against was that of wit, could not be other than welcome. He composes Articles there, and walks, and dines, and plays cards, and talks; languishingly waits letters from his Voland, copiously writes to her. It is in these copious love-despatches that the whole matter is so graphically painted: we have an Asmodeus' view of the interior life there, and live it over again with him. The Baroness, in red silk tempered with snow-white gauze, is beauty and grace itself; her old Mother is a perfect romp of fifteen, or younger; the house is lively with company; the Baron, as we said, speaks

little, but to the purpose; is seen sometimes with his pipe, in dressing-gown and red slippers; otherwise the best of landlords. Remarkable figures drop in; generals disabled at Quebec; fashionable gentlemen rusticating in the neighbourhood; Abbés, such as Galiani, Raynal, Morellet; perhaps Grimm and his Epinay; other Philosophes and Philosophesses. Guests too of less dignity, acting rather as butts than as bowmen: for it is the part of every one either to have wit, or to be the cause of having it.

Among these latter, omitting many, there is one whom, for country's sake, we must particularise; an ancient personage, named Hoop (Hope), whom they called *Père* Hoop; by birth a Scotchman. Hoop seems to be a sort of fixture at Grandval, not bowman, therefore butt; and is shot at for his lodging. A most shrivelled, wind-dried, dyspeptic, chill-shivering individual; Professor of Life-weariness; sits dozing there,—dozes there, however, with one eye open. He submits to be called *Mummy*, without a shrug; cowers over the fire, at the warmest corner. Yet is there a certain sardonic subacidity in Père Hoop; when he slowly unlocks his leathern jaw, we hear him with a sort of pleasure. Hoop has been in various countries and situations; in that croaking metallic voice of his, can tell a distinct story. Diderot apprehended he would one day hang himself: if so, what Museum now holds his remains? The Parent Hoops, it would seem, still dwelt in the city of Edinburgh; he, the second son, as Bourdeaux Merchant, having helped them thither, out of some proud Manorhouse no longer weather-tight. Can any ancient person of that city give us trace of such a man? It must be inquired into. One only of Father Hoop's reminiscences we shall report, as the highest instance on record of a national virtue: At the battle of Prestonpans, a kinsman of Hoop's, a gentleman with gold rings on his fingers, stands fighting and fencing for life with a rough Highlander; the Highlander, by some clever stroke, whisks the jewelled hand clear off, and then—picks it up from the ground, sticks it in his sporran for future leisure, and fights on! The force of *vertue*[3] could no farther go.

[3] *Virtus* (properly *man*liness, the chief duty of man) meant, in old Rome, *power of fighting;* means, in modern Rome, *connoisseurship;* in Scotland, *thrift*.—ED.

It cannot be uninteresting to the general reader to learn, that in the last days of October, in the year of grace 1770, Denis Diderot over-ate himself (as he was in the habit of doing), at Grandval; and had an obstinate 'indigestion of bread.' He writes to Grimm that it is the worst of all indigestions: to his fair Voland that it lay more than fifteen hours on his stomach, with a weight like to crush the life out of him; would neither *remonter* nor *descendre;* nor indeed stir a hairsbreadth for warm water, *de quelque côté que je la* (the warm water) *prisse.*

Clysterium donare,
Ensuita purgare!

Such things, we grieve to say, are of frequent occurrence; the Holbachian table is all-too plenteous; there are cooks too, we know, who boast of their diabolic ability to cause the patient, by successive intensations of their art, to eat with new and ever-new appetite, till he explode on the spot. Diderot writes to his fair one, that his clothes will hardly button, that he is thus 'stuffed' and thus; and so indigestion succeeds indigestion. Such Narratives fill the heart of sensibility with amazement; nor to the woes that chequer this imperfect, caco-gastric state of existence is the tear wanting.

The society of Grandval cannot be accounted very dull: nevertheless let no man regretfully compare it with any neighbourhood he may have drawn by lot, in the present day; or even with any no-neighbourhood, if that be his affliction. The gaiety at Grandval was of the kind that could not last. Were it not that some Belief is left in Mankind, how could the sport of emitting Unbelief continue? On which ground indeed, Swift, in his masterly argument 'Against abolishing the Christian Religion,' urges, not without pathos, that innumerable men of wit, enjoying a comfortable status by virtue of jokes on the Catechism, would hereby be left without pabulum, the staff of life cut away from their hand. The Holbachs were blind to this consideration; and joked away, as if it would last forever. So too with regard to Obscene Talk: where were the merit of a riotous Mother-in-law saying and doing, in public, these never-imagined scandals, had not a cunningly-devised fable of Modesty been set afloat; were there not some remnants of Modesty still extant among the unphilosophic classes? The

Samoeids (according to Travellers) have few double-meanings; among stall-cattle the witty effect of such is lost altogether. Be advised, then, foolish old woman! 'Burn not thy bed;' the light of *it* will soon go out, and then?—Apart from the common household topics, which the 'daily household epochs' bring with them everywhere, two main elements, we regret to say, come to light in the conversation at Grandval; these, with a spicing of Noble-sentiment, are, unfortunately, Blasphemy and Bawdry. Whereby, at this distance, the whole matter grows to look poor and effete; and we can honestly rejoice that it all *has* been, and need not be again.

But now, hastening back to Paris, friend Diderot finds proof-sheets enough on his desk, and notes, and invitations, and applications from distressed men of letters; nevertheless runs over, in the first place, to seek news from the Voland; will then see what is to be done. He writes much; talks and visits much: besides the Savans, Artists, spiritual Notabilities, domestic or migratory, of the period, he has a liberal allowance of unnotable Associates; especially a whole bevy of young or oldish, mostly rather spiteful Women; in whose gossip he is perfect. We hear the rustling of their silks, the clack of their pretty tongues, tittle-tattle 'like their pattens when they walk;' and the sound of it, fresh as yesterday, through this long vista of Time, has become significant, almost prophetic. Life could not hang heavy on Diderot's hands: he is a vivid, open, all-embracing creature; could have found occupation anywhere; has occupation here forced on him, enough and to spare. 'He 'had much to do, and did much of his own,' says Mademoiselle; 'yet three-fourths of his life were employed in helping whoso-'ever had need of his purse, of his talents, of his management: 'his study, for the five-and-twenty years I knew it, was like a 'well-frequented shop, where, as one customer went, another 'came.' He could not find in his heart to refuse any one. He has reconciled Brothers, sought out Tutorages, settled Law-suits; solicited Pensions; advised, and refreshed hungry Authors, instructed ignorant ones: he has written advertisements for incipient helpless Grocers; he once wrote the dedication (to a pious Duc d'Orléans) of a lampoon against himself,—and so raised some five-and-twenty gold louis for the famishing lampooner. For all these things, let not the light Diderot want

his reward with us! Other reward, except from himself, he got none; but often the reverse; as in his little Drama, *La Pièce et le Prologue*, may be seen humorously and good-humouredly set forth under his own hand. Indeed, his clients, by a vast majority, were of the scoundrel species; in any case, Denis knew well, that to expect gratitude, is to deserve ingratitude.—'Rivière well contented' (hear Mademoiselle) 'now 'thanks my father, both for his services and his advices; sits 'chatting another quarter of an hour, and then takes leave; 'my father shows him down. As they are on the stairs, Rivière 'stops, turns round, and asks: "M. Diderot, are you ac-'quainted with Natural History?"—"Why, a little; I know 'an aloe from a sago, a pigeon from a colibri."—"Do you know 'the history of the *Formica-leo?*"—"No."—"It is a little in-'sect of great industry: it digs a hole in the ground like a 'reversed funnel; covers the top with fine light sand; entices 'foolish insects to it; takes them, sucks them, then says to 'them: M. Diderot, I have the honour to wish you good-'day." My father stood laughing like to split at this adven-'ture.'

Thus, amid labour and recreation; questionable Literature, unquestionable Loves; eating and digesting, better or worse; in gladness and vexation of spirit, in laughter ending in sighs, does Diderot pass his days. He has been hard toiled, but then well flattered, and is nothing of a hypochondriac. What little service renown can do him, may now be considered as done: he is in the centre of the literature, science, art, of his nation; not numbered among the Academical Forty, yet in his heterodox heart entitled to be almost proud of the exclusion; successful in Criticism, successful in Philosophism, nay, highest of sublunary glories, successful in the Theatre; vanity may whisper, if she please, that, excepting the unattainable Voltaire alone, he is the first of Frenchmen. High heads are in correspondence with him the low-born; from Catherine the Empress to Philidor the Chess-player, he is in honoured relation with all manner of men; with scientific Buffons, Eulers, D'Alemberts; with artistic Falconnets, Vanloos, Riccobonis, Garricks. He was ambitious of being a Philosophe; and now the whole fast-growing sect of Philosophes look up to him as their head and mystagogue. To Denis Diderot, when he stept out of the

Langres Diligence at the College d'Harcourt; or afterwards, when he walked in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom, with uneasy steps over the burning marl, a much smaller destiny would have seemed desirable.

Within doors, again, matters stand rather disjointed, as surely they might well do: however, Madame Diderot is always true and assiduous; if one Daughter talk enthusiastically, and at length (though her father has written the *Religieuse*) die mad in a convent, the other, a quick, intelligent, graceful girl, is waxing into womanhood, and takes after the father's Philosophism, leaving the mother's Piety far enough aside. To which elements of mixed good and evil from without, add this so incalculably favourable one from within, that of all literary men Diderot is the least a self-listener; none of your puzzling, repenting, forecasting, earnest-bilious temperaments, but sanguineous-lymphatic every fibre of him, living lightly from hand to mouth, in a world mostly painted rose-colour.

The *Encyclopédie*, after nigh thirty years of endeavour, to which only the Siege of Troy may offer some faint parallel, is finished. Scattered Compositions of all sorts, printed or manuscript, making many Volumes, lie also finished; the Philosophe has reaped no golden harvest from them. He is getting old: can live out of debt, but is still poor. Thinking to settle his daughter in marriage, he must resolve to sell his Library; money is not otherwise to be raised. Here, however, the Northern Cleopatra steps imperially forward; purchases his Library for its full value; gives him a handsome pension, as Librarian to keep it for her; and pays him moreover fifty years thereof by advance in ready-money. This we call imperial (in a world so necessitous as ours), though the whole munificence did not, we find, cost above three thousand pounds; a trifle to the Empress of All the Russias. In fact, it is about the sum your first-rate king eats, as board-wages, in one day; who, however, has seldom sufficient; not to speak of charitable overplus. In admiration of his Empress, the vivid Philosophe is now louder than ever; he even breaks forth into rather husky singing. Who shall blame him? The Northern Cleopatra (whom, in any case, he must regard with other eyes than we) has stretched out a generous helping hand to him, where otherwise there was no help, but only hindrance and injury: all men will, and should,

more or less, obey the proverb, to praise the fair as their own market goes in it.

One of the last great scenes in Diderot's Life is his personal visit to this Benefactress. There is but one Letter from him with Petersburg for date, and that of ominous brevity. The Philosophe was of open, unheedful, free-and-easy disposition; Prince and Polisson were singularly alike to him; it was 'hail fellow well met,' with every Son of Adam, be his clothes of one stuff or the other. Such a man could be no court-sycophant, was ill-calculated to succeed at court. We can imagine that the Neva-colic, and the character of the Neva-water, were not the only things hurtful to his nerves there. For King Denis, who had dictated such wonderful anti-regalities in the Abbé Raynal's *History*,[4] and himself, in a moment of sibylism, emitted that surprising announcement, surpassing all yet uttered or utterable in the Tyrtæan way, how

> *Ses mains* (the freeman's) *ourderaient les entrailles du prêtre,*
> *Au défaut d'un cordon, pour étrangler les rois;*

for such a one, the climate of the Neva must have had something oppressive in it. The *entrailles du prêtre* were, indeed, much at his service here, could he get clutch of them; but only for musical philosophe fiddle-strings; nowise for a *cordon!*

Nevertheless, Cleopatra is an uncommon woman (or rather an uncommon man), and can put-up with many things; and, in a gentle skilful way, make the crooked straight. As her Philosophe presents himself in common apparel, she sends him a splendid court-suit; and as he can now enter in a civilised

[4] "But who *dare* stand for this?" would Diderot exclaim. "I will, I!" eagerly responded the Abbé: "do but proceed." (*A la Mémoire de Diderot*, by De Meister.)—Was the following one of the passages?

'Happily these perverse instructors' of Kings 'are chastised, sooner or 'later, by the ingratitude and contempt of their pupils. Happily, these pu- 'pils too, miserable in the bosom of grandeur, are tormented all their life by 'a deep *ennui*, which they cannot banish from their palaces. Happily, the 'religious prejudices, which have been planted in their souls, return on them 'to affright them. Happily, the mournful silence of their people teaches 'them, from time to time, the deep hatred that is borne them. Happily, 'they are too cowardly to despise that hatred. Happily (*heureusement*), after 'a life which no mortal, not even the meanest of their subjects, would accept, 'if he knew all its wretchedness, they find black inquietude, terror and de- 'spair, seated on the pillow of their deathbed (*les noires inquiétudes, la ter- 'reur et le désespoir assis au chevet de leur lit de mort*).'—Surely, 'kings 'have poor times of it, to be run foul of by the like of thee'!

manner, she sees him often, confers with him largely: by happy chance, Grimm too at length arrives; and the winter passes without accident. Returning home in triumph, he can express himself contented, charmed with his reception; has mineral specimens, and all manner of hyperborean memorials for friends; unheard-of things to tell; how he crossed the bottomless half-thawed Dwina, with the water boiling up round his wheels, the ice bending like leather, yet crackling like mere ice,—and shuddered, and got through safe; how he was carried, coach and all, into the ferry-boat at Mittau, on thirty wild men's backs, who floundered in the mud, and nigh broke his shoulder-blade; how he investigated Holland, and had conversed with Empresses, and High Mightinesses, and principalities and powers; and so seen and conquered, for his own spiritual behoof, several of the Seven Wonders.

But, alas! his health is broken; old age is knocking at the gate, like an importunate creditor, who has warrant for entering. The radiant lightly-bounding soul is now getting all dim and stiff, and heavy with sleep; Diderot too must adjust himself, for the hour draws nigh. These last years he passes retired and private, not idle or miserable. Philosophy or Philosophism has nowise lost its charm; whatsoever so much as calls itself Philosopher can interest him. Thus poor Seneca, on occasion of some new Version of his Works, having come before the public, and been roughly dealt with, Diderot, with a long, last, concentrated effort, writes his *Vie de Sénèque;* struggling to make the hollow solid. Which, alas, after all his tinkering still sounds hollow; and notable Seneca, so wistfully desirous to stand well with Truth, and yet not ill with Nero, is and remains only our perhaps niceliest-proportioned Half-and half, the plausiblest Plausible on record; no great man, no true man, no man at all; yet how much lovelier than such,—as the mild-spoken, tolerating, charity-sermoning, immaculate Bishop Dogbolt to some rude, self-helping, sharp-tongued Apostle Paul! Under which view, indeed, Seneca (though surely erroneously, for the origin of the thing was different) has been called, in this generation, 'the father of all such as wear shovel-hats.'

The *Vie de Sénèque*, as we said, was Diderot's last effort. It remains only to be added of him, that he too died; a lingering but quiet death, which took place on the 30th of July 1784.

He once quotes from Montaigne the following, as Sceptic's viaticum: 'I plunge stupidly, head foremost, into this dumb Deep, 'which swallows me, and chokes me, in a moment,—full of 'insipidity and indolence. Death, which is but a quarter of 'an hour's suffering, without consequence and without injury, 'does not require peculiar precepts.' It was Diderot's allotment to die with all due 'stupidity:' he was leaning on his elbows; had eaten an apricot two minutes before, and answered his wife's remonstrances with: "*Mais que diable de mal veux-tu que cela me fasse?* (How the deuce can that hurt me?)" She spoke again, and he answered not. His House, which the curious will visit when they go to Paris, was in the Rue Taranne, at the intersection thereof with the Rue Saint-Benoît. The dust that was once his Body went to mingle with the common earth, in the church of Saint-Roch; his Life, the wondrous manifold Force that was in him, that was He,—returned to ETERNITY, and *is* there, and continues there!

Two things, as we saw, are celebrated of Diderot. First, that he had the most encyclopedical head ever seen in this world: second, that he talked as never man talked;—properly, as never man his admirers had heard, or as no man living in Paris then. That is to say, his was at once the widest, fertilest, and readiest of minds.

With regard to the Encyclopedical Head, suppose it to mean that he was of such vivacity as to admit, and look upon with interest, almost all things which the circle of Existence could offer him; in which sense, this exaggerated laudation, of Encyclopedism, is not without its fraction of meaning. Of extraordinary openness and compass we must grant the mind of Diderot to be; of a susceptibility, quick activity; even naturally of a depth, and in its practical realised shape, of a universality, which bring it into kindred with the highest order of minds. On all forms of this wondrous Creation he can look with loving wonder; whatsoever thing stands there, has some brotherhood with him, some beauty and meaning for him. Neither is the faculty to see and interpret wanting; as, indeed, this faculty to *see* is inseparable from that other faculty to *look*, from that true wish to look; moreover (under another figure), Intellect is not a *tool*, but a *hand* that can handle any tool.

Nay, in Diderot we may discern a far deeper universality than that shown, or showable, in Lebreton's *Encyclopédie;* namely, a poetical; for, in slight gleams, this too manifests itself. A universality less of the head than of the character; such, we say, is traceable in this man, at lowest the power to have acquired such. Your true Encyclopedical is the Homer, the Shakspeare; every genuine Poet is a living embodied, real Encyclopedia,—in more or fewer volumes; were his experience, his insight of details, never so limited, the whole world lies imaged as a whole within him; whosoever has not seized the whole cannot yet speak truly (much less can he speak *musically*, which is harmoniously, *concordantly*) of any part, but will perpetually need new guidance, rectification. The fit use of such a man is as hodman; not feeling the plan of the edifice, let him carry stones to it; if he *build* the smallest stone, it is likeliest to be wrong, and cannot continue there.

But the truth is, as regards Diderot, this saying of the encyclopedical head comes mainly from his having edited a Bookseller's Encyclopedia, and can afford us little direction. Looking into the man, and omitting his trade, we find him by nature gifted in a high degree with openness and versatility, yet nowise in the highest degree; alas, in quite another degree than that. Nay, if it be meant farther that in practice, as a writer and thinker, he has taken-in the Appearances of Life and the World, and images them back with such freedom, clearness, fidelity, as we have not many times witnessed elsewhere, as we have not various times seen infinitely surpassed elsewhere, —this same encyclopedical praise must altogether be denied him. Diderot's habitual world, we must, on the contrary, say, is a half-world, distorted into looking like a whole; it is properly, a poor, fractional, insignificant world; partial, inaccurate, perverted from end to end. Alas, it was the destiny of the man to live as a Polemic; to be born also in the morning-tide and first splendour of the Mechanical Era; not to know, with the smallest assurance or continuance, that in the Universe other than a mechanical meaning could exist; which force of destiny acting on him through his whole course, we have obtained what now stands before us: no Seer, but only possibilities of a Seer, transient irradiations of a Seer, looking through the organs of a Philosophe.

These two considerations, which indeed are properly but one (for a thinker, especially of French birth, in the Mechanical Era, could not be other than a Polemic), must never for a moment be left out of view in judging the works of Diderot. It is a great truth, one side of a great truth, that the Man makes the Circumstances, and spiritually as well as economically is the artificer of his own fortune. But there is another side of the same truth, that the man's circumstances are the element he is appointed to live and work in; that he by necessity takes his complexion, vesture, embodiment, from these, and is in all practical manifestations modified by them almost without limit; so that in another no less genuine sense, it can be said Circumstances make the Man. Now, if it continually behoves us to insist on the former truth towards ourselves, it equally behoves us to bear in mind the latter when we judge of other men. The most gifted soul, appearing in France in the Eighteenth Century, can as little embody himself in the intellectual vesture of an Athenian Plato, as in the grammatical one; his thoughts can no more be Greek, than his language can. He thinks of the things belonging to the French eighteenth century, and in the dialect he has learned there; in the light, and under the conditions prescribed there. Thus, as the most original, resolute and self-directing of all the Moderns has written: 'Let 'a man be but born ten years sooner, or ten years later, his 'whole aspect and performance shall be different.'

Grant, doubtless, that a certain perennial Spirit, true for all times and all countries, can and must look through the thinking of certain men, be it in what dialect soever: understand meanwhile that strictly this holds only of the highest order of men, and cannot be exacted of inferior orders; among whom, if the most sedulous, loving inspection disclose any even secondary symptoms of such a Spirit, it ought to seem enough. Let us remember well that the high-gifted, high-striving Diderot was born in the point of Time and of Space, when of all uses he could turn himself to, of all dialects speak in, this of Polemical Philosophism, and no other, seemed the most promising and fittest. Let us remember too, that no earnest Man, in any Time, ever spoke what was wholly meaningless; that, in all human convictions, much more in all human practices, there was a true side, a fraction of truth; which fraction is

precisely the thing we want to extract from them, if we want anything at all to do with them.

Such palliative considerations (which, for the rest, concern not Diderot, now departed, and indifferent to them, but only ourselves who could wish to *see* him, and not to mis-see him) are essential, we say, through our whole survey of his Opinions and Proceedings, generally so alien to our own; but most of all in reference to his head Opinion, properly the source of all the rest, and more shocking, even horrible, to us than all the rest: we mean his Atheism. David Hume, dining once in company where Diderot was, remarked that he did not think there were any Atheists. "Count us," said a certain Monsieur——: they were eighteen. "Well," said the Monsieur——, "it is pretty fair if you have fished-out fifteen at the first cast; and three others who know not what to think of it." In fact, the case was common: your Philosophe of the first water had grown to reckon Atheism a necessary accomplishment. Gowk-thrapple Naigeon, as we saw, had made himself very perfect therein.

Diderot was an Atheist, then; stranger still, a proselytising Atheist, who esteemed the creed worth earnest reiterated preaching, and enforcement with all vigour! The unhappy man had 'sailed through the Universe of Worlds and found no Maker 'thereof; had descended to the abysses where Being no longer 'casts its shadow, and felt only the rain-drops trickle down; 'and seen only the gleaming rainbow of Creation, which ori-'ginated from no Sun; and heard only the everlasting storm 'which no one governs; and looked upwards for the DIVINE 'EYE, and beheld only the black, bottomless, glaring DEATH'S 'EYE-SOCKET:' such, with all his wide voyagings, was the philosophic fortune he had realised.

Sad enough, horrible enough: yet instead of shrieking over it, or howling and Ernulphus'-cursing over it, let us, as the more profitable method, keep our composure, and inquire a little, What possibly it may mean? The whole phenomenon, as seems to us, will explain itself from the fact above insisted on, that Diderot was a Polemic of decided character, in the Mechanical Age. With great expenditure of words and froth, in arguments as waste, wild-weltering, delirious-dismal as the chaos they would demonstrate; which arguments one now knows

not whether to laugh at or to weep at, and almost does both,—have Diderot and his sect perhaps made this apparent to all who examine it: That in the French System of Thought (called also the Scotch, and still familiar enough everywhere, which for want of a better title we have named the Mechanical), there is no room for a Divinity; that to him, for whom *intellect*, or the power of knowing and believing, is still synonymous with *logic*, or the mere power of arranging and communicating, there is absolutely no proof discoverable of a Divinity; and such a man has nothing for it but either, if he be of half spirit as is the frequent case, to trim despicably all his days between two opinions; or else, if he be of whole spirit, to anchor himself on the rock or quagmire of Atheism,—and farther, should he see fit, proclaim to others that there is good riding there. So much may Diderot have demonstrated: a conclusion at which we nowise turn pale. Was it much to know that Metaphysical Speculation, by nature, whirls round in endless Mahlstroms, both 'creating and swallowing—itself'? For so wonderful a self-swallowing product of the Spirit of the Time, could any result to arrive at be fitter than this of the ETERNAL NO? We thank Heaven that the result *is* finally arrived at; and so now we can look out for something other and farther. But above all things, *proof* of a God? A *probable* God! The smallest of Finites struggling to *prove* to itself, that is to say if we will consider it, to picture-out and arrange as diagram, and *include* within itself, the Highest Infinite; in *which*, by hypothesis, *it* lives, and moves, and has its being! This, we conjecture, will one day seem a much more miraculous miracle than that negative result it has arrived at,—or any other result a still absurder chance might have led it to. He who, in some singular Time of the World's History, were reduced to wander about, in stooping posture, with painfully constructed sulphur-match and farthing rushlight (as Gowkthrapple Naigeon), or smoky tar-link (as Denis Diderot), searching for the Sun, and did not find it; were *he* wonderful and his failure; or the singular Time, and its having put him on that search?

Two small consequences, then, we fancy, may have followed, or be following, from poor Diderot's Atheism. First, that all speculations of the sort we call Natural Theology, endeavouring to prove the beginning of all Belief by some Belief earlier

than the beginning, are barren, ineffectual, impossible; and may, so soon as otherwise it is profitable, be abandoned. Of final causes, man, by the nature of the case, can *prove* nothing; knows them, if he know anything of them, not by glimmering flint-sparks of Logic, but by an infinitely higher light of intuition; never long, by Heaven's mercy, wholly eclipsed in the human soul; and (under the name of Faith, as regards this matter) familiar to us now, historically or in conscious possession, for upwards of four thousand years. To all open men it will indeed always be a favourite contemplation, that of watching the ways of Being, how animate adjusts itself to inanimate, rational to irrational, and this that we name Nature is not a desolate phantasm of a chaos, but a wondrous existence and reality. If, moreover, in those same 'marks of design,' as he has called them, the contemplative man find new evidence of a designing Maker, be it well for him: meanwhile, surely one would think, the still clearer evidence lay nearer home,—in the contemplative man's own head that *seeks* after such! In which point of view our extant Natural Theologies, as our innumerable Evidences of the Christian Religion, and suchlike, may, in reference to the strange season they appear in, have a certain value, and be worth printing and reprinting; only let us understand for whom, and how, they are valuable; and be nowise wroth with the poor Atheist, whom they have not convinced, and could not, and should not convince.

The second consequence seems to be, that this whole current hypothesis of the Universe being 'a Machine,' and then of an Architect, who constructed it, sitting as it were apart, and guiding it, and *seeing* it go,—may turn-out an inanity and nonentity; not much longer tenable: with which result likewise we shall, in the quietest manner, reconcile ourselves. 'Think 'ye,' says Goethe, 'that God made the Universe, and then let 'it run round his finger (*am Finger laufen liesse*)?' On the whole, that Metaphysical hurly-burly, of our poor jarring, self-listening Time, ought at length to compose itself: that seeking for a God *there*, and not *here*; everywhere outwardly in physical Nature, and not inwardly in our own Soul, where alone He is to be found by us,—begins to get wearisome. Above all, that 'faint possible Theism,' which now forms our common English creed, cannot be too soon swept out of the world. What

is the nature of that individual, who with hysterical violence theoretically asserts a God, perhaps a revealed Symbol and Worship of God; and for the rest, in thought, word and conduct, meet with him where you will, is found living as if his theory were some polite figure of speech, and his theoretical God a mere distant Simulacrum, with whom he, for his part, had nothing farther to do? Fool! The ETERNAL is no Simulacrum; God is not only There, but Here or nowhere, in that life-breath of thine, in that act and thought of thine,—and thou wert wise to look to it. If there is no God, as the fool hath said in his heart, then live on with thy decencies, and lip-homages, and inward greed, and falsehood, and all the hollow cunningly-devised halfness that recommends thee to the Mammon of this world: if there *is* a God, we say, look to it! But in either case, what art thou? The Atheist is false; yet is there, as we see, a fraction of truth in him; he is true compared with thee; thou, unhappy mortal, livest wholly in a lie, art wholly a lie.

So that Diderot's Atheism comes, if not to much, yet to something: we learn this from it, and from what it stands connected with, and may represent for us, That the Mechanical System of Thought is, in its essence, Atheistic; that whosoever will admit no organ of truth but logic, and nothing to exist but what can be argued of, must even content himself with this sad result, as the only solid one he can arrive at; and so with the best grace he can, 'of the æther make a gas, of God a force, 'of the second world a coffin;' of man an aimless nondescript, 'little better than a kind of vermin.' If Diderot, by bringing matters to this parting of the roads, have enabled or helped us to strike into the truer and better road, let him have our thanks for it. As to what remains, be pity our only feeling; was not his creed miserable enough; nay, moreover, did not he bear its miserableness, so to speak, in our stead, so that it need now be no longer borne by any one?

In this same for him unavoidable circumstance, of the age he lived in, and the system of thought universal then, will be found the key to Diderot's whole spiritual character and procedure; the excuse for much in him that to us is false and perverted. Beyond the meagre 'rushlight of closet-logic,' Diderot recognised no guidance. That 'the Highest cannot be spoken of in words,' was a truth he had not dreamt of. Whatsoever

thing he cannot debate of, we might almost say measure and weigh, and carry off with him to be eaten and enjoyed, is simply not there for him. He dwelt all his days in the 'thin rind of the Conscious;' the deep fathomless domain of the Unconscious, whereon the other rests and has its meaning, was not, under any shape, surmised by him. Thus must the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stand perennially shut against this man; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended: within such strait conditions had he to live and labour. And naturally to distort and dislocate, more or less, all things he laboured on: for whosoever, in one way or another, recognises not that 'Divine Idea of the World, which lies at the bottom of Appearances,' can rightly interpret no Appearance; and whatsoever spiritual thing he does, must do it partially, do it falsely.

Mournful enough, accordingly, is the account which Diderot has given himself of Man's Existence; on the duties, relations, possessions whereof he had been a sedulous thinker. In every conclusion we have this fact of his Mechanical culture. Coupled too with another fact honourable to him: that he stuck not at half measures; but resolutely drove-on to the result, and held by it. So that we cannot call him a Sceptic; he has merited the more decisive name of Denier. He may be said to have denied that there was any the smallest Sacredness in Man, or in the Universe; and to have both speculated and lived on this singular footing. We behold in him the notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief that thinking man perhaps ever had. Religion, in all recognisable shapes and senses, he has done what man can do to clear out of him. He believes that pleasure is pleasant; that a lie is unbelievable; and there his *credo* terminates; nay there, what perhaps makes his case almost unique, his very fancy seems to fall silent.

For a consequent man, all possible spiritual perversions are included under that grossest one of 'proselytising Atheism;' the rest, of what kind and degree soever, cannot any longer astonish us. Diderot has them of all kinds and degrees: indeed, we might say, the French Philosophe (take him at his *word*, for inwardly much that was foreign adhered to him, do what he could) has emitted a Scheme of the World, to which all that Oriental Mullah, Bonze or Talapoin have done in that kind is

poor and feeble. Omitting his whole unparalleled Cosmogonies and Physiologies; coming to his much milder Tables of the Moral Law, we shall glance here but at one minor external item, the relation between man and man; and at only one branch of this, and with all slightness, the relation of covenants; for example, the most important of these, Marriage.

Diderot has convinced himself, and indeed, as above became plain enough, acts on the conviction, that Marriage, contract it, solemnise it in what way you will, involves a solecism which reduces the amount of it to simple zero. It is a suicidal covenant; annuls itself in the very forming. 'Thou makest a 'vow,' says he, twice or thrice, as if the argument were a clencher, 'thou makest a vow of eternal constancy under a rock, which 'is even then crumbling away.' True, O Denis! the rock crumbles away: all things are changing; man changes faster than most of them. That, in the mean while, an Unchangeable lies under all this, and looks forth, solemn and benign, through the whole destiny and workings of man, is another truth; which no Mechanical Philosophe, in the dust of his logic-mill, can be expected to grind-out for himself. Man changes, and will change: the question then arises, Is it wise in him to tumble forth, in headlong obedience to this love of change; is it so much as possible for him? Among the dualisms of man's wholly dualistic nature, this we might fancy was an observable one: that along with his unceasing tendency to change, there is a no less ineradicable tendency to persevere. Were man only here to change, let him, far from marrying, cease even to hedge-in fields, and plough them; before the autumn season, he may have lost the whim of reaping them. Let him return to the nomadic state, and set his house on wheels; nay there too a certain restraint must curb his love of change, or his cattle will perish by incessant driving, without grazing in the intervals. O Denis, what things thou babblest, in thy sleep! How, in this world of perpetual flux, shall man secure himself the smallest foundation, except hereby alone: that he take preassurance of his Fate; that in this and the other high act of his life, his Will, with all solemnity, *abdicate* its right to change; voluntarily become involuntary, and say once for all, Be there then no farther dubitation on it! Nay, the poor unheroic craftsman; that very stocking-weaver, on whose loom thou now as amateur

weavest: must not even he do as much,—when he signed his apprentice-indentures? The fool! who had such a relish in himself for all things, for kingship and emperorship; yet made a vow (under a penalty of death by hunger) of eternal constancy to stocking-weaving. Yet otherwise, were no thriving craftsmen possible; only botchers, bunglers, transitory nondescripts; unfed, mostly gallows-feeding. But, on the whole, what feeling it was in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament:* this, of all things in the world, is what Denis will think of for æons, without discovering. Unless, perhaps, it were to increase the vestry-fees?

Indeed, it must be granted, nothing yet seen or dreamt of can surpass the liberality of friend Denis as *magister morum;* nay, often our poor Philosophe feels called on, in an age of such Spartan rigour, to step forth into the public Stews, and emit his inspiriting *Macte virtute!* there. Whither let the curious in such matters follow him: we, having work elsewhere, wish him 'good journey,'—or rather 'safe return.' Of Diderot's indelicacy and indecency there is for us but little to say. Diderot is not what we call indelicate and indecent; he is utterly unclean, scandalous, shameless, sansculottic-samoeidic. To declare with lyric fury that this is wrong; or with historic calmness, that a pig of sensibility would go distracted did you accuse him of it, may, especially in countries where 'indecent exposure' is cognisable at police-offices, be considered superfluous. The only question is one in Natural History: Whence comes it? What may a man, not otherwise without elevation of mind, of kindly character, of immense professed philanthropy, and doubtless of extraordinary insight, mean thereby? To us it is but another illustration of the fearless, all-for-logic, thoroughly consistent, Mechanical Thinker. It coheres well enough with Diderot's theory of man; that there is nothing of sacred either in man or around man; and that chimeras are chimerical. How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth, significance, divineness of SILENCE; of the sacredness of 'Secrets known to all'?

Nevertheless, Nature is great; and Denis was among her nobler productions. To a soul of his sort something like what we call Conscience could nowise be wanting: the feeling of

Moral Relation; of the Infinite character thereof, as the essence and soul of all else that can be felt or known, must needs assert itself in him. Yet how assert itself? An Infinitude to one in whose whole Synopsis of the Universe no Infinite stands marked? Wonderful enough is Diderot's method; and yet not wonderful, for we see it, and have always seen it, daily. Since there is nothing sacred in the Universe, whence this sacredness of what you call Virtue? Whence or how comes it that you, Denis Diderot, *must* not do a wrong thing; could not, without some qualm, speak, for example, one Lie, to gain Mahomet's Paradise with all its houris? There is no resource for it, but to get into that interminable ravelment of Reward and Approval, virtue being its own reward; and assert louder and louder,—contrary to the stern experience of all men, from the Divine Man, expiring with agony of bloody sweat on the accursed tree, down to us two, O reader (if we have ever done one Duty), —that Virtue is synonymous with Pleasure. Alas! was Paul, an Apostle of the Gentiles, virtuous; and was virtue its own reward, when *his* approving conscience told him that he was 'the chief of sinners,' and if bounded to this life alone, 'of all men the most miserable'? Or has that same so sublime Virtue, at bottom, little to do with Pleasure, if with far other things? Are Eudoxia, and Eusebeia, and Euthanasia, and all the rest of them, of small account to Eubosia and Eupepsia; and the pains of any moderately-paced Career of Vice, Denis himself being judge, as a drop in the bucket to the 'Career of Indigestions'? This is what Denis never in this world will grant.

But what, then, will he do? One of two things: admit, with Grimm, that there are 'two justices,'—which may be called by many handsome names, but properly are nothing but the pleasant justice, and the unpleasant; whereof only the former is binding! Herein, however, Nature has been unkind to Denis; he is not a literary court-toadeater; but a free, genial, even poetic creature. There remains, therefore, nothing but the second expedient: to 'assert louder and louder;' in other words, to become a Philosophe-Sentimentalist. Most wearisome, accordingly, is the perpetual clatter kept up here about *vertu, honnêteté, grandeur, sensibilité, âmes nobles;* how unspeakably good it is to be virtuous, how pleasant, how sublime:—In the Devil and his grandmother's name, *be* virtuous; and let us

have an end of it! In such sort (we will, nevertheless, joyfully recognise) does great Nature in spite of all contradictions, declare her royalty, her divineness; and, for the poor Mechanical Philosophe, has prepared, since the substance is hidden from him, a shadow wherewith he can be cheered.

In fine, to our ill-starred Mechanical Philosophe-Sentimentalist, with his loud preaching and rather poor performing, shall we not, in various respects, 'thankfully stretch-out the hand'? In all ways 'it was necessary that the logical side of things should likewise be made available.' On the whole, wondrous higher developments of much, of Morality among the rest, are visible in the course of the world's doings, at this day. A plausible prediction were that the Ascetic System is not to regain its exclusive dominancy. Ever, indeed, must Self-denial, '*Annihilation of Self*,' be the beginning of all moral action: meanwhile, he that looks well, may discern filaments of a nobler System, wherein this lies included as one harmonious element. Who knows, for example, what new unfoldings and complex adjustments await us, before the true relation of moral Greatness to moral Correctness, and their proportional value, can be established? How, again, is perfect tolerance for the Wrong to coexist with ever-present conviction that Right stands related to it, as a God does to a Devil,—an Infinite to an opposite Infinite? How, in a word, through what tumultuous vicissitudes, after how many false partial efforts, deepening the confusion, shall it at length be made manifest, and kept continually manifest, to the hearts of men, that the Good is not properly the highest, but the Beautiful; that the true Beautiful (differing from the false, as Heaven does from Vauxhall) comprehends in it the Good?—In some future century, it may be found that Denis Diderot, acting and professing, in wholeness and with full conviction, what the immense multitude act in halfness and without conviction, has, though by strange inverse methods, forwarded the result. It was long ago written, the Omnipotent 'maketh the wrath of the wicked,' the folly of the foolish, 'to praise Him.' In any case, Diderot acted it, and not we; Diderot bears it, and not we: peace be with Diderot!

The other branch of his renown is excellence as a Talker. Or in wider view, think his admirers, his philosophy was not more surpassing than his delivery thereof. What his philosophy

amounts to, we have been examining: but now, that in this other conversational province he was eminent, is easily believed. A frank, ever-hoping, social character; a mind full of knowledge, full of fervour; of great compass, of great depth, ever on the alert: such a man could not have other than a 'mouth of gold.' It is still plain, whatsoever thing imaged itself before him was imaged in the most lucent clearness; was rendered back, with light labour, in corresponding clearness. Whether, at the same time, Diderot's conversation, relatively so superior, deserved the intrinsic character of supreme, may admit of question. The worth of words spoken depends, after all, on the wisdom that resides in them; and in Diderot's words there was often too little of this. Vivacity, far-darting brilliancy, keenness of theoretic vision, paradoxical ingenuity, gaiety, even touches of humour; all this must have been here: whosoever had preferred sincerity, earnestness, depth of practical rather than theoretic insight, with not less of impetuosity, of clearness and sureness, with humour, emphasis, or such other melody or rhythm as that utterance demanded,—must have come over to London; and, with forbearant submissiveness, listened to our Johnson. Had we the stronger man, then? Be it rather, as in that duel of Cœur-de-Lion with the light, nimble, yet also invincible Saladin, that each nation had the strength which most befitted it.

Closely connected with this power of conversation is Diderot's facility of composition. A talent much celebrated; numerous really surprising proofs whereof are on record: how he wrote long works within the week; sometimes within almost the four-and-twenty hours. Unhappily, enough still remains to make such feats credible. Most of Diderot's Works bear the clearest traces of extemporaneousness; *stans pede in uno!* They are much liker printed talk, than the concentrated well-considered utterance which, from a man of that weight, we expect to see set in types. It is said, 'he wrote good pages, but could not write a good book.' Substitute *did not* for *could not;* and there is truth in the saying. Clearness, as has been observed, comprehensibility at a glance, is the character of whatever Diderot wrote: a clearness which, in visual objects, rises into the region of the Artistic, and resembles that of Richardson or Defoe. Yet, grant that he makes his meaning clear,

what is the nature of that meaning itself? Alas, for most part, only a hasty, flimsy, superficial meaning, with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. More or less of disorder reigns in all Works that Diderot wrote; not order, but the plausible appearance of such: the true heart of the matter is not found; 'he skips deftly along the radii, and skips over the centre, and 'misses it.'

Thus may Diderot's admired Universality and admired Facility have both turned to disadvantage for him. We speak not of his reception by the world: this indeed is the 'age of specialties;' yet, owing to other causes, Diderot the Encyclopedist had success enough. But, what is of far more importance, his inward growth was marred: the strong tree shot not up in any one noble stem, bearing boughs and fruit, and shade all round; but spread out horizontally, after a very moderate height, into innumerable branches, not useless, yet of quite secondary use. Diderot could have been an Artist; and he was little better than an Encyclopedic Artisan. No smatterer, indeed; a faithful artisan; of really universal equipment, in his sort: he did the work of many men; yet nothing, or little, which many could not have done.

Accordingly, his Literary Works, now lying finished some fifty years, have already, to the most surprising degree, shrunk in importance. Perhaps no man so much talked of is so little known; to the great majority he is no longer a Reality, but a Hearsay. Such, indeed, partly is the natural fate of Works Polemical, which almost all Diderot's are. The Polemic annihilates his opponent; but in so doing annihilates himself too, and both are swept away to make room for something other and farther. Add to this, the slight-textured transitory character of Diderot's style; and the fact is well enough explained. Meanwhile, let him to whom it applies consider it; him among whose gifts it was to rise into the Perennial, and who dwelt rather low down in the Ephemeral, and ephemerally fought and scrambled there! Diderot the great has contracted into Diderot the easily-measurable: so must it be with others of the like.

In how many sentences can the net-product of all that tumultuous Atheism, printed over many volumes, be comprised! Nay, the whole *Encyclopédie*, that world's wonder of the eight-

eenth century, the Belus' Tower of an age of refined Illumination, what has it become? Alas, no stone tower, that will stand there as our strength and defence through all times; but, at best, a wooden *Helepolis* (City-taker), wherein stationed, the Philosophus Policaster has burnt and battered down many an old ruinous Sorbonne; and which now, when that work is pretty well over, may, in turn, be taken asunder, and used as firewood. The famed Encyclopedical Tree itself has proved an artificial one, and borne no fruit. We mean that, in its nature, it is mechanical only; one of those attempts to parcel-out the invisible mystical Soul of Man, with its *infinitude* of phases and character, into shop-lists of what are called 'faculties,' 'motives,' and suchlike; which attempts may indeed be made with all degrees of insight, from that of a Dr. Spurzheim to that of Denis Diderot or Jeremy Bentham; and prove useful for a day, but for a day only.

Nevertheless it were false to regard Diderot as a Mechanist and nothing more; as one working and grinding blindly in the mill of mechanical Logic, joyful with his lot there, and unconscious of any other. Call him one rather who contributed to deliver us therefrom: both by his manful whole spirit as a Mechanist, which drove all things to their ultimatum and crisis; and even by a dim-struggling faculty, which virtually aimed beyond this. Diderot, we said, was gifted by Nature for an Artist: strangely flashing through his mechanical encumbrances, are rays of thought, which belong to the Poet, to the Prophet; which, in other environment, could have revealed the deepest to us. Not to seek far, consider this one little sentence, which he makes the last of the dying Sanderson: '*Le temps, la matière et l'espace ne sont peut-être qu'un point* (Time, Matter and Space are perhaps but a *point*)!'

So too in Art, both as a speaker and a doer, he is to be reckoned as one of those who pressed forward irresistibly out of the artificial barren sphere of that time, into a truer genial one. His Dramas, the *Fils Naturel*, the *Père de Famille*, have indeed ceased to live; yet is the attempt towards great things visible in them; the attempt remains to us, and seeks otherwise, and has found, and is finding, fulfilment. Not less in his *Salons* (Judgments of Art-Exhibitions), written hastily for Grimm, and by ill chance on artists of quite secondary cha-

racter, do we find the freest recognition of whatever excellence there is; nay an impetuous endeavour, not critically, but even creatively, towards something more excellent. Indeed, what with their unrivalled clearness, painting the picture over again for us, so that we too *see* it, and can judge it; what with their sunny fervour, inventiveness, real artistic genius, which wants nothing but a *hand*, they are, with some few exceptions in the German tongue, the only Pictorial Criticisms we know of worth reading. Here too, as by his own practice in the Dramatic branch of art, Diderot stands forth as the main originator, almost the sole one in his own country, of that many-sided struggle towards what is called Nature, and copying of Nature, and faithfulness to Nature: a deep indispensable truth, subversive of the old error; yet under that figure, only a half-truth, for Art too is Art, as surely as Nature is Nature; which struggle, meanwhile, either as half-truth, or working itself into a whole truth, may be seen, in countries that have any Art, still forming the tendency of all artistic endeavour. In which sense, Diderot's *Essay on Painting* has been judged worth translation by the greatest modern Judge of Art, and greatest modern Artist, in the highest kind of Art; and may be read anew, with argumentative commentary and exposition, in *Goethe's Works*.

Nay, let us grant, with pleasure, that for Diderot himself the realms of Art were not wholly unvisited; that he too, so heavily imprisoned, stole Promethean fire. Among these multitudinous, most miscellaneous Writings of his, in great part a manufactured farrago of Philosophism no longer saleable, and now looking melancholy enough,—are two that we can almost call Poems; that have something perennially poetic in them: *Jacques le Fataliste;* in a still higher degree, the *Neveu de Rameau*. The occasional *blueness* of both; even that darkest indigo in some parts of the former, shall not altogether affright us. As it were, a loose straggling sunbeam flies here over Man's Existence in France, now nigh a century behind us: 'from the height of luxurious elegance to the depths of shamelessness,' all is here. Slack, careless seems the combination of the picture; wriggling, disjointed, like a bundle of flails; yet strangely united in the painter's inward unconscious feeling. Wearisomely crackling wit gets silent; a grim, taciturn,

dare-devil, almost Hogarthian humour rises in the back-ground. Like this there is nothing that we know of in the whole range of French literature: La Fontaine is shallow in comparison; the La Bruyère wit-species not to be named. It resembles *Don Quixote* rather; of somewhat similar stature; yet of complexion altogether different; through the one looks a sunny Elysium, through the other a sulphurous Erebus: both hold of the Infinite. This *Jacques*, perhaps, was not quite so hastily put together: yet there too haste is manifest: the Author finishes it off, not by working-out the figures and movements, but by dashing his brush against the canvas; a manœuvre which in this case has not succeeded. The *Rameau's Nephew*, which is the shorter, is also the better; may pass for decidedly the best of all Diderot's compositions. It looks like a Sibylline utterance from a heart all in fusion: no ephemeral thing (for it was written as a Satire on Palissot) was ever more perennially treated. Strangely enough too, it lay some fifty years in German and Russian Libraries; came out first in the masterly version of Goethe, in 1805: and only (after a deceptive *re*-translation by a M. Saur, a courageous mystifier otherwise) reached the Paris public in 1821,—when perhaps *all* for whom and against whom it was written were no more!—It is a farce-tragedy; and its fate has corresponded to its purport. One day it must also be translated into English; but will require to be done by *head*; the common steam-machinery will not properly suffice for it.

We here (*con la bocca dolce*) take leave of Diderot in his intellectual aspect, as Artist and Thinker: a richly endowed, unfavourably situated nature; whose effort, much marred, yet not without fidelity of aim, can triumph, on rare occasions; and is perhaps nowhere utterly fruitless. In the moral aspect, as Man, he makes a somewhat similar figure; as indeed, in all men, in him especially, the Opinion and the Practice stand closely united; and as a wise man has remarked, 'the specu-'lative principles are often but a supplement (or excuse) to the 'practical manner of life.' In conduct, Diderot can nowise seem admirable to us; yet neither inexcusable; on the whole, not at all quite worthless. Lavater traced in his physiognomy 'something timorous;' which reading his friends admitted to be a correct one. Diderot, in truth, is no hero: the earnest

soul, wayfaring and warfaring in the complexities of a World like to overwhelm him, yet wherein he by Heaven's grace will keep faithfully warfaring, prevailing or not, can derive small solacement from this light, fluctuating, not to say flimsy existence of Diderot: no Gospel in that kind has he left us. The man, in fact, with all his high gifts, had rather a female character. Susceptible, sensitive, living by impulses, which at best he had *fashioned* into some show of principles; with vehemence enough, with even a female uncontrollableness; with little of manful steadfastness, considerateness, invincibility. Thus, too, we find him living mostly in the society of women, or of men who, like women, flattered him, and made life easy for him; recoiling with horror from an earnest Jean Jacques, who understood not the science of walking in a vain show; but imagined, poor man, that truth was there as a thing to be told, as a thing to be acted.

We call Diderot, then, not a coward; yet not in any sense a brave man. Neither towards himself, nor towards others, was he brave. All the virtues, says M. de Meister, which require not 'a great *suite* (sequency) of ideas' were his; all that do require such a *suite* were not his. In other words, what duties were easy for him ne did: happily Nature had rendered several easy. His spiritual aim, moreover, seemed not so much to be enforcement, exposition of Duty, as discovery of a Duty-made-easy. Natural enough that he should strike into that province of *sentiment*, *cœur noble* and so forth. Alas, to declare that the beauty of virtue is beautiful, costs comparatively little: to win it, and wear it, is quite another enterprise,—wherein the loud braggart, we know, is not the likeliest to succeed. On the whole, peace be with *sentiment*, for that also lies behind us!—For the rest, as hinted, what duties were difficult our Diderot left undone. How should he, the *cœur sensible*, front such a monster as Pain? And now, since misgivings cannot fail in that course, what is to be done but fill-up all asperities with floods of *sensibilité*, and so voyage more or less smoothly along? *Est-il bon? Est-il méchant?* is his own account of himself. At all events, he was no voluntary hypocrite; that great praise can be given him. And thus with Mechanical Philosophism, and *passion vive;* working, flirting; 'with more of softness 'than of true affection, sometimes with the malice and rage of 'a child, but on the whole an inexhaustible fund of goodna-

'tured simplicity,' has he come down to us, for better or worse: and what can we do but receive him?—

If now we and our reader, reinterpreting for our present want that Life and Performance of Diderot, have brought it clearer before us, be the hour spent thereon, were it even more wearisome, no profitless one! Have we not striven to unite our own brief present moment more and more compactly with the Past and with the Future; have we not done what lay at our hand towards reducing that same Memoirism of the Eighteenth Century into History, and 'weaving' a thread or two thereof nearer to the condition of a web?

But finally, if we rise with this matter, as we should try to do with all matters, into the proper region of Universal History, and look on it with the eye not of this time or of that time, but of Time at large, perhaps the prediction might stand here, That intrinsically, essentially little lies in it; that one day when the net-result of our European way of life comes to be summed-up, this whole as yet so boundless concern of French Philosophism will dwindle into the thinnest of fractions, or vanish into nonentity! Alas, while the rude History and Thoughts of those same '*Juifs misérables*,' the barbaric Warsong of a Deborah and Barak, the rapt prophetic Utterance of an unkempt Isaiah, last now, with deepest significance, say only these three thousand years,—what has the thrice-resplendent *Encyclopédie* shrivelled into within these threescore! This is a fact which, explain it, express it, in what way he will, your Encyclopedist should actually consider. *Those* were tones caught from the sacred Melody of the All, and have harmony and meaning forever; *these* of his are but outer discords, and their jangling dies away without result. 'The special, sole and deep-'est theme of the World's and Man's History,' says the Thinker of our time, 'whereto all other themes are subordinated, re-'mains the Conflict of UNBELIEF and BELIEF. All epochs 'wherein Belief prevails, under what form it may, are splendid, 'heart-elevating, fruitful for contemporaries and posterity. All 'epochs, on the contrary, wherein Unbelief, under what form 'soever, maintains its sorry victory, should they even for a 'moment glitter with a sham splendour, vanish from the eyes 'of posterity; because no one chooses to burden himself with 'study of the unfruitful.'

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.

IN TWO FLIGHTS.[1]

[1833.]

FLIGHT FIRST.

'THE life of every man,' says our friend Herr Sauerteig, 'the 'life even of the meanest man, it were good to remember, is a 'Poem; perfect in all manner of Aristotelean requisites; with 'beginning, middle and end; with perplexities, and solutions; 'with its Will-strength (*Willenkraft*) and warfare against Fate, 'its elegy and battle-singing, courage marred by crime, every-'where the two tragic elements of Pity and Fear; above all, 'with supernatural machinery enough,—for was not the man '*born* out of NONENTITY; did he not *die*, and miraculously 'vanishing return thither? The most indubitable Poem! Nay, 'whoso will, may he not name it a Prophecy, or whatever else 'is highest in his vocabulary; since only in Reality lies the 'essence and foundation of all that was ever fabled, visioned, 'sung, spoken, or babbled by the human species; and the 'actual Life of Man includes in it all Revelations, true and 'false, that have been, are, or are to be. Man! I say there-'fore, *reverence thy fellow-man*. He too issued from Above; is 'mystical and supernatural (as thou namest it): this know thou 'of a truth. Seeing also that we ourselves are of so high Author-'ship, is not that, in very deed, "the highest Reverence," and 'most needful for us: "Reverence for oneself"?

'Thus, to my view, is every Life, more properly is every Man 'that has life to lead, a small strophe, or occasional verse, com-'posed by the Supernal Powers; and published, in such type 'and shape, with such embellishments, emblematic head-piece 'and tail-piece as thou seest, to the thinking or unthinking

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, Nos. 43, 44 (July and August).

'Universe. Heroic strophes some few are; full of force and 'a sacred fire, so that to latest ages the hearts of those that 'read therein are made to tingle. Jeremiads others seem; mere 'weeping laments, harmonious or disharmonious Remonstrances 'against Destiny; whereat we too may sometimes profitably 'weep. Again, have we not flesh-and-blood strophes of the 'idyllic sort,—though in these days rarely, owing to Poor-Laws, 'Game-Laws, Population-Theories and the like! Farther, of 'the comic laughter-loving sort; yet ever with an unfathom-'able earnestness, as is fit, lying underneath: for, bethink thee, 'what is the mirthfulest grinning face of any Grimaldi, but a 'transitory *mask*, behind which quite otherwise grins—the most 'indubitable *Death's-head!* However, I say farther, there are 'strophes of the pastoral sort (as in Ettrick, Afghaunistan, and 'elsewhere); of the farcic-tragic, melodramatic, of all named 'and a thousand unnamable sorts there are poetic strophes, 'written, as was said, in Heaven, printed on Earth, and pub-'lished (bound in woollen cloth, or *clothes*) for the use of the 'studious. Finally, a small number seem utter Pasquils, mere 'ribald libels on Humanity: these too, however, are at times 'worth reading.

'In this wise,' continues our too obscure friend, 'out of all 'imaginable elements, awakening all imaginable moods of heart 'and soul, "barbarous enough to excite, tender enough to as-'suage," ever contradictory yet ever coalescing, is that mighty 'world-old Rhapsodia of Existence page after page (generation 'after generation), and chapter (or epoch) after chapter, poetic-'ally put together! This is what some one names "the grand 'sacred Epos, or Bible of World-History; infinite in meaning 'as the Divine Mind it emblems; wherein he is wise that can 'read here a line, and there a line."

'Remark too, under another aspect, whether it is not in this 'same Bible of World-History that all men, in all times, with 'or without clear consciousness, have been unwearied to read, 'what we may call *read;* and again to write, or rather to be '*written!* What is all History, and all Poesy, but a deciphering 'somewhat thereof, out of that mystic heaven-written Sanscrit; 'and rendering it into the speech of men? *Know thyself*, value 'thyself, is a moralist's commandment (which I only half ap-'prove of); but *Know others*, value others, is the hest of Nature

'herself. Or again, *Work while it is called Today:* is not that 'also the irreversible law of being for mortal man? And now, 'what is all working, what is all knowing, but a faint interpret- 'ing and a faint showing-forth of that same *Mystery of Life,* 'which ever remains infinite,—heaven-written mystic Sanscrit? 'View it as we will, to him that lives, Life is a divine matter; 'felt to be of quite sacred significance. Consider the wretched- 'est "straddling biped that wears breeches" of thy acquaint- 'ance; into whose wool-head, Thought, as thou rashly sup- 'posest, never entered; who, in froth-element of business, 'pleasure, or what else he names it, walks forever in a vain 'show; asking not Whence, or Why, or Whither; looking up 'to the Heaven above as if some upholsterer had made it, and 'down to the Hell beneath as if *he* had neither part nor lot 'there: yet tell me, does not he too, over and above his five 'finite senses, acknowledge some sixth *infinite* sense, were it 'only that of Vanity? For, sate him in the other five as you 'may, will this sixth sense leave him rest? Does he not rise 'early and sit late, and study impromptus, and (in constitutional 'countries) parliamentary motions, and bursts of eloquence, and 'gird himself in whalebone, and pad himself and perk himself, 'and in all ways painfully take heed to his goings; feeling (if 'we must admit it) that an altogether infinite endowment has 'been intrusted him also, namely, a Life to lead? Thus does 'he too, with his whole force, in his own way, proclaim that 'the world-old Rhapsodia of Existence is divine, and an in- 'spired Bible; and, himself a wondrous *verse* therein (be it 'heroic, be it pasquillic), study with his whole soul, as we said, 'both to *read* and to *be written!*

'Here also I will observe, that the *manner* in which men 'read this same Bible is, like all else, proportionate to their 'stage of culture, to the circumstances of their environment. 'First, and among the earnest Oriental nations, it was read 'wholly like a Sacred Book; most clearly by the most earnest, 'those wondrous Hebrew Readers; whose reading accordingly 'was itself sacred, has meaning for all tribes of mortal men; 'since ever, to the latest generation of the world, a true utter- 'ance from the innermost of man's being will speak signifi- 'cantly to man. But, again, in how different a style was that 'other Oriental reading of the Magi; of Zerdusht, or whoever

'it was that first so opened the matter? Gorgeous semi-sensual 'Grandeurs and Splendours: on infinite darkness, brightest- 'glowing light and fire;—of which, all defaced by Time, and 'turned mostly into lies, a quite late reflex, in those Arabian 'Tales and the like, still leads captive every heart. Look, 'thirdly, at the earnest West, and that Consecration of the 'Flesh, which stept forth life-lusty, radiant, smiling-earnest, in 'immortal grace, from under the chisel and the stylus of old 'Greece. Here too was the Infinite intelligibly proclaimed as 'infinite: and the antique man walked between a Tartarus and 'an Elysium, his brilliant Paphos-islet of Existence embraced 'by boundless oceans of sadness and fateful gloom.—Of which 'three antique manners of reading, our modern manner, you 'will remark, has been little more than imitation: for always, 'indeed, the West has been rifer of doers than of speakers. 'The Hebrew manner has had its echo in our Pulpits and 'choral aisles; the Ethnic Greek and Arabian in numberless 'mountains of Fiction, rhymed, rhymeless, published by sub- 'scription, by puffery, in periodicals, or by money of your own '(*durch eignes Geld*). Till now at last, by dint of iteration and 'reiteration through some ten centuries, all these manners have 'grown obsolete, wearisome, meaningless; listened to only as 'the monotonous moaning wind, while there is nothing else to 'listen to:—and so now, well-nigh in total oblivion of the In- 'finitude of Life (except what small *unconscious* recognition the '"straddling biped" above argued of may have), we wait, in 'hope and patience, for some *fourth* manner of anew convin- 'cingly announcing it.'

These singular sentences from the *Æsthetische Springwurzeln* we have thought right to translate and quote, by way of proem and apology. We are here about to give some critical account of what Herr Sauerteig would call a 'flesh-and-blood Poem of the purest Pasquil sort;' in plain words, to examine the biography of the most perfect scoundrel that in these latter ages has marked the world's history. Pasquils too, says Sauerteig, 'are at times worth reading.' Or quitting that mystic dialect of his, may we not assert in our own way, that the history of an Original Man is always worth knowing? So magnificent a thing is Will incarnated in a creature of like fashion with ourselves, we run to witness *all* manifestations thereof:

what man soever has marked out a peculiar path of life for himself, let it lead this way or that way, and successfully travelled the same, of him we specially inquire, How he travelled; What befell him on the journey? Though the man were a knave of the first water, this hinders not the question, How he managed his knavery? Nay it rather encourages such question; for nothing properly is wholly despicable, at once detestable and forgetable, but your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false; who never in his existence once spoke or did any true thing (for indeed his mind lives in twilight, with cat-vision, incapable of *discerning* truth); and yet had not the manfulness to speak or act any decided lie; but spent his whole life in plastering together the True and the False, and therefrom manufacturing the Plausible. Such a one our Transcendentals have defined as a Moral Hybrid and chimera; therefore, under the moral point of view, as an Impossibility, and mere deceptive Nonentity,—put together for commercial purposes. Of which sort, nevertheless, how many millions, through all manner of gradations, from the wielder of kings' sceptres to the vender of brimstone matches, at tea-tables, council-tables, behind shop-counters, in priests' pulpits, incessantly and everywhere, do now, in this world of ours, in this Isle of ours, offer themselves to view!

From such, at least from this intolerable over-proportion of such, might the merciful Heavens one day deliver us! Glorious, heroic, fruitful for his own Time, and for all Time and all Eternity, is the constant Speaker and Doer of Truth! If no such again, in the present generation, is to be vouchsafed us, let us have at least the melancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Wretched mortal, who with a single eye to be 'respectable' forever sittest cobbling together two Inconsistencies, which stick not for an hour, but require ever new gluten and labour, —will it, by no length of experience, no bounty of Time or Chance, be revealed to thee that Truth is of Heaven, and Falsehood is of Hell; that if thou cast not from thee the one or the other, thy existence is wholly an Illusion and optical and tactual Phantasm; that properly thou existest not at all? Respectable! What, in the Devil's name, is the use of Respectability, with never so many gigs and silver spoons, if thou inwardly art the pitifulest of all men? I would thou wert either cold or hot.

One such desirable second-best, perhaps the chief of all such, we have here found in the Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, Pupil of the Sage Althotas, Foster-child of the Scherif of Mecca, probable Son of the last King of Trebisond; named also Acharat, and Unfortunate Child of Nature; by profession healer of diseases, abolisher of wrinkles, friend of the poor and impotent, grand-master of the Egyptian Mason-lodge of High Science, Spirit-summoner, Gold-cook, Grand Cophta, Prophet, Priest, and thaumaturgic moralist and swindler; really a Liar of the first magnitude, thorough-paced in all provinces of lying, what one may call the King of Liars. Mendez Pinto, Baron Münchausen and others are celebrated in this art, and not without some colour of justice; yet must it in candour remain doubtful whether any of these comparatively were much more than liars from the teeth onwards: a perfect character of the species in question, who lied not in word only, nor in act and word only, but continually, in thought, word and act; and, so to speak, lived wholly in an element of lying, and from birth to death did nothing but lie,—was still a desideratum. Of which desideratum Count Alessandro offers, we say, if not the fulfilment, perhaps as near an approach to it as the limited human faculties permit. Not in the modern ages, probably not in the ancient (though these had their Autolycus, their Apollonius, and enough else), did any completer figure of this sort issue out of Chaos and Old Night: a sublime kind of figure, presenting himself with 'the air of calm strength,' of sure perfection in his art; whom the heart opens itself to, with wonder and a sort of welcome. 'The only vice I know,' says one, 'is Inconsistency.' At lowest, answer we, he that *does* his work shall have his work judged of. Indeed, if Satan himself has in these days become a poetic hero, why should not Cagliostro, for some short hour, be a prose one? 'One first question,' says a great Philosopher, 'I ask of every man: Has he an aim, which with undivided 'soul he follows, and advances towards? Whether his aim is 'a right one or a wrong one, forms but my second question.' Here, then, is a small 'human Pasquil,' not without poetic interest.

However, be this as it may, we apprehend the eye of science at least cannot view him with indifference. Doubtful, false as much is in Cagliostro's manner of being, of this there is no

doubt, that starting from the lowest point of Fortune's wheel, he rose to a height universally notable; that, without external furtherance, money, beauty, bravery, almost without common sense, or any discernible worth whatever, he sumptuously supported, for a long course of years, the wants and digestion of one of the greediest bodies, and one of the greediest minds; outwardly in his five senses, inwardly in his 'sixth sense, that of vanity,' nothing straitened. Clear enough it is, however much may be supposititious, that this japanned Chariot, rushing through the world, with dust-clouds and loud noise, at the speed of four swift horses, and topheavy with luggage, has an existence. The six Beef-eaters too, that ride prosperously heralding his advent, honourably escorting, menially waiting on him, are they not realities? Ever must the purse open, paying turnpikes, tavern-bills, drink-moneys, and the thousandfold tear and wear of such a team; yet ever, like a horn-of-plenty, does it pour; and after brief rest, the chariot ceases not to roll. Whereupon rather pressingly arises the scientific question: How? Within that wonderful machinery, of horses, wheels, top-luggage, beef-eaters, sits only a gross, thickset Individual, evincing dulness enough; and by his side a Seraphina, with a look of doubtful reputation: how comes it that means still meet ends, that the whole Engine, like a steam-coach wanting fuel, does not stagnate, go silent, and fall to pieces in the ditch? Such question did the scientific curiosity of the present writer often put; and for many a day in vain.

Neither, indeed, as Book-readers know, was he peculiar herein. The great Schiller, for example, struck both with the poetic and the scientific phases of the matter, admitted the influences of the former to shape themselves anew within him; and strove with his usual impetuosity to burst (since unlocking was impossible) the secrets of the latter: and so his unfinished Novel, the *Geisterseher*, saw the light. Still more renowned is Goethe's Drama of the *Gross-Kophta;* which, as himself informs us, delivered him from a state of mind that had become alarming to certain friends; so deep was the hold this business, at one of its epochs, had taken of him. A dramatic Fiction, that of his, based on the strictest possible historical study and inquiry; wherein perhaps the faithfulest image of the historical Fact, as yet extant in any shape, lies in artistic miniature curi-

ously unfolded. Nay mere Newspaper-readers, of a certain age, can bethink them of our London Egyptian Lodges of High Science; of the Countess Seraphina's dazzling jewelries, nocturnal brilliancies, sibyllic ministrations and revelations; of Miss Fry and Milord Scott, and Messrs. Priddle and the other shark *bailiffs;* and Lord Mansfield's judgment-seat; the Comte d'Adhémar, the Diamond Necklace, and Lord George Gordon. For Cagliostro, hovering through unknown space, twice (perhaps thrice) lighted on our London, and did business in the great chaos there.

Unparalleled Cagliostro! Looking at thy so attractively decorated private theatre, wherein thou actedst and livedst, what hand but itches to draw aside thy curtain; overhaul thy paste-boards, paintpots, paper-mantles, stage-lamps, and turning the whole inside out, find *thee* in the middle thereof! For there of a truth wert thou: though the rest was all foam and sham, there sattest *thou,* as large as life, and as esurient; warring against the world, and indeed conquering the world, for it remained thy tributary, and yielded daily rations. Innumerable Sheriff's-officers, Exempts, Sbirri, Alguazils, of every European climate, were prowling on thy traces, their intents hostile enough; thyself wert single against them all; in the whole earth thou hadst no friend. What say we, in the whole earth? In the whole universe thou hadst no friend! Heaven knew nothing of thee; *could* in charity know nothing of thee; and as for Beelzebub, *his* friendship, it is ascertained, cannot count for much.

But to proceed with business. The present inquirer, in obstinate investigation of a phenomenon so noteworthy, has searched through the whole not inconsiderable circle which his tether (of circumstances, geographical position, trade, health, extent of money-capital) enables him to describe: and, sad to say, with the most imperfect results. He has read Books in various languages and jargons; feared not to soil his fingers, hunting through ancient dusty Magazines, to sicken his heart in any labyrinth of iniquity and imbecility; nay he had not grudged to dive even into the infectious *Mémoires de Casanova,* for a hint or two,—could he have found that work, which, however, most British Librarians make a point of denying that they possess. A painful search, as through some

spiritual pest-house; and then with such issue! The quantity of discoverable printing about Cagliostro (so much being burnt) is now not great; nevertheless in frightful proportion to the quantity of information given. Except vague Newspaper rumours and surmises, the things found written of this Quack are little more than temporary Manifestos, by himself, by gulled or gulling disciples of his: not true therefore; at best only certain fractions of what he wished or expected the blinder Public to reckon true; misty, embroiled, for most part highly stupid; perplexing, even provoking; which can only be believed—to be, under such and such conditions, Lies. Of this sort emphatically is the English '*Life of the Count Cagliostro*, price three shillings and sixpence:' a Book indeed which one might hold (so fatuous, inane is it) to be some mere dream-vision and unreal eidolon, did it not now stand palpably there, as 'Sold by T. Hookham, Bond Street, 1787;' and bear to be handled, spurned at and torn into pipe-matches. Some human creature doubtless was at the writing of it; but of what kind, country, trade, character or gender, you will in vain strive to fancy. Of like fabulous stamp are the *Mémoires pour le Comte de Cagliostro*, emitted, with *Requête à joindre*, from the Bastille, during that sorrowful business of the Diamond Necklace, in 1786; no less the *Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au Peuple Anglais*, which followed shortly after, at London; from which two indeed, that fatuous inexplicable English *Life* has perhaps been mainly manufactured. Next come the *Mémoires authentiques pour servir à l'Histoire du Comte de Cagliostro*, twice printed in the same year 1786, at Strasburg and at Paris; a swaggering, lascivious Novelette, without talent, without truth or worth, happily of small size. So fares it with us: alas, all this is but the *outside* decorations of the private-theatre, or the sounding of catcalls and applauses from the stupid audience; nowise the interior bare walls and dress-room which we wanted to see! Almost our sole even half-genuine documents are a small barren pamphlet, *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780; and a small barren Volume purporting to be his *Life*, written at Rome, of which latter we have a French version, dated 1791. It is on this *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le Nom de Comte Cagliostro*, that our main dependence must be placed; of which Work, meanwhile, whether it is wholly or only half-

genuine, the reader may judge by one fact: that it comes to us through the medium of the Roman Inquisition, and the proofs to substantiate it lie in the Holy Office there. Alas, this reporting Familiar of the Inquisition was too probably something of a Liar; and he reports lying Confessions of one who was not so much a Liar as a Lie! In such enigmatic duskiness, and thrice-folded involution, after all inquiries, does the matter yet hang.

Nevertheless, by dint of meditation and comparison, light-points that stand fixed, and abide scrutiny, do here and there disclose themselves; diffusing a fainter light over what otherwise were dark, so that it is no longer invisible, but only dim. Nay after all, is there not in this same uncertainty a kind of fitness, of poetic congruity? Much that would offend the eye stands discreetly lapped in shade. Here too Destiny has cared for her favourite: that a powder-nimbus of astonishment, mystification and uncertainty should still encircle the Quack of Quacks, is right and suitable; such was by Nature and Art his chosen uniform and environment. Thus, as formerly in Life, so now in History, it is in huge fluctuating smoke-whirlwinds, partially illumed into a most brazen glory, yet united, coalescing with the region of everlasting Darkness, in miraculous clear-obscure, that he works and rides.

'Stern Accuracy in inquiring, bold Imagination in expound-'ing and filling-up; these,' says friend Sauerteig, 'are the two 'pinions on which History soars,'—or flutters and wabbles. To which two pinions let us and the readers of this Magazine now daringly commit ourselves. Or chiefly indeed to the *latter* pinion, of Imagination; which, if it be the *larger*, will indeed make an unequal flight! Meanwhile, the style at least shall if possible be equal to the subject.

Know, then, that in the year 1743, in the city of Palermo, in Sicily, the family of Signor Pietro Balsamo, a shopkeeper, were exhilarated by the birth of a Boy. Such occurrences have now become so frequent, that, miraculous as they are, they occasion little astonishment: old Balsamo for a space, indeed, laid down his ellwands and unjust balances; but for the rest, met the event with equanimity. Of the possetings, junketings, gossipings, and other ceremonial rejoicings, transacted accord-

ing to the custom of the country, for welcome to a New-comer, not the faintest tradition has survived; enough, that the small New-comer, hitherto a mere ethnic or heathen, is in a few days made a Christian of, or as we vulgarly say, christened; by the name Giuseppe. A fat, red, globular kind of fellow, not under nine pounds avoirdupois, the bold Imagination can figure him to be: if not proofs, there are indications that sufficiently betoken as much.

Of his teething and swaddling adventures, of his scaldings, squallings, pukings, purgings, the strictest search into History can discover nothing; not so much as the epoch when he passed out of long-clothes stands noted in the fasti of Sicily. That same 'larger pinion' of Imagination, nevertheless, conducts him from his native blind-alley, into the adjacent street *Casaro;* descries him, with certain contemporaries now unknown, essaying himself in small games of skill; watching what phenomena, of carriage-transits, dog-battles, street-music, or suchlike, the neighbourhood might offer (intent above all on any windfall of chance *provender*); now, with incipient scientific spirit, puddling in the gutters; now, as small poet (or maker), baking mud-pies. Thus does he tentatively coast along the outskirts of Existence, till once he shall be strong enough to land and make a footing there.

Neither does it seem doubtful that with the earliest exercise of speech, the gifts of simulation and dissimulation began to manifest themselves; Giuseppe, or Beppo as he was now called, could indeed speak the truth,—but only when he saw his advantage in it. Hungry also, as above hinted, he too-probably often was: a keen faculty of digestion, a meagre larder within doors; these two circumstances, so frequently conjoined in this world, reduced him to his inventions. As to the thing called Morals, and knowledge of Right and Wrong, it seems pretty certain that such knowledge, the sad fruit of Man's Fall, had in great part been spared him; if he ever heard the commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, he most probably could not believe in it, therefore could not obey it. For the rest, though of quick temper, and a ready striker where clear prospect of victory showed itself, we fancy him vociferous rather than bellicose, not prone to violence where stratagem will serve; almost pacific, indeed, had not his many wants necessitated him to

many conquests. Above all things, a brazen impudence develops itself; the crowning gift of one born to scoundrelism. In a word, the fat thickset Beppo, as he skulks about there, plundering, playing dog's tricks, with his finger in every mischief, already gains character; shrill housewives of the neighbourhood, whose sausages he has filched, whose weaker sons maltreated, name him Beppo Maldetto, and indignantly prophesy that he will be hanged. A prediction which, as will be seen, the issue has signally falsified.

We hinted that the household larder was in a leanish state; in fact, the outlook of the Balsamo family was getting troubled; old Balsamo had, during these things, been called away on his long journey. Poor man! The future eminence and preëminence of his Beppo he foresaw not, or what a world's-wonder he had thoughtlessly generated; as indeed, which of us, by much calculating, can sum-up the net-total (Utility, or Inutility) of any his most indifferent act,—a seed cast into the seedfield of TIME, to grow there, producing fruits or poisons, forever! Meanwhile Beppo himself gazed heavily into the matter; hung his thick lips while he saw his mother weeping; and, for the rest, eating what fat or sweet thing he could come at, let Destiny take its course.

The poor widow, ill-named *Felicità*, spinning out a painful livelihood by such means as only the poor and forsaken know, could not but many times cast an impatient eye on her brass-faced, voracious Beppo; and ask him, If he never meant to turn himself to anything? A maternal uncle, of the moneyed sort, (for he has uncles not without influence), has already placed him in the Seminary of St. Roch, to gain some tincture of schooling there: but Beppo feels himself misplaced in that sphere; 'more than once runs away;' is flogged, snubbed, tyrannically checked on all sides; and finally, with such slender stock of schooling as had pleased to offer itself, returns to the street. The widow, as we said, urges him, the uncles urge: Beppo, wilt thou never turn thyself to anything? Beppo, with such speculative faculty, from such low watchtower as he commands, is in truth, being forced to it, from time to time, looking abroad into the world; surveying the conditions of mankind, therewith contrasting his own wishes and capabilities. Alas, his wishes are manifold; a most hot Hunger (in all

kinds), as above hinted; but on the other hand, his leading capability seemed only the Power to Eat. What profession or condition, then? Choose; for it is time. Of all the terrestrial professions, that of Gentleman, it seemed to Beppo, had, under these circumstances, been most suited to his feelings: but then the outfit? the apprentice-fee? Failing which, he, with perhaps as much sagacity as one could expect, decides for the Ecclesiastical.

Behold him then, once more by the uncle's management, journeying, a chubby brass-faced boy of thirteen, beside the Reverend Father-General of the Benfratelli, to their neighbouring Convent of Cartegirone, with intent to enter himself novice there. He has donned the novice-habit; is 'intrusted to the keeping of the Convent-Apothecary,' on whose gallipots and crucibles he looks round with wonder. Were it by accident that he found himself Apothecary's Famulus, were it by choice of his own—nay was it not, in either case, by *design* of Destiny, intent on perfecting her work?—Enough, in this Cartegirone Laboratory there awaited him, though as yet he knew it not, life-guidance and determination; the great want of every genius, even of the scoundrel-genius. He himself confesses that he here learned some (or, as he calls it, *the*) 'principles of chemistry and medicine.' Natural enough: new books of the Chemists lay here, old books of the Alchemists; distillations, sublimations visibly went on; discussions there were, oral and written, of gold-making, salve-making, treasure-digging, divining-rods, projection, and the alcahest: besides, had he not among his fingers calxes, acids, Leyden-jars? Some first elements of medico-chemical conjurorship, so far as phosphorescent mixtures, aqua-toffana, ipecacuanha, cantharides tincture, and suchlike would go, were now attainable; sufficient when the hour came, to set-up any average Quack, much more the Quack of Quacks. It is here, in this unpromising environment, that the seeds, therapeutic, thaumaturgic, of the Grand Cophta's stupendous workings and renown were sown.

Meanwhile, as observed, the environment looked unpromising enough. Beppo with his two endowments of Hunger and of Power to Eat, had made the best choice he could; yet, as it soon proved, a rash and disappointing one. To his astonishment, he finds that even here he 'is in a conditional

world ;' and, if he will employ his capability of eating or enjoying, must first, in some measure, work and suffer. Contention enough hereupon : but now dimly arises or reproduces itself, the question, Whether there were not a *shorter* road, that of stealing? Stealing—under which, generically taken, you may include the whole art of scoundrelism ; for what is Lying itself but a *theft* of my belief?—stealing, we say, is properly the North-West Passage to Enjoyment : while common Navigators sail painfully along torrid shores, laboriously doubling this or the other Cape of Hope, your adroit Thief-Parry, drawn on smooth dog-sledges, is already there and back again. The misfortune is, that stealing requires a talent ; and failure in that North-West voyage is more fatal than in any other. We hear that Beppo was 'often punished :' painful experiences of the fate of genius ; for all genius, by its nature, comes to disturb *somebody* in his ease, and your thief-genius more so than most!

Readers can now fancy the sensitive skin of Beppo mortified with prickly cilices, wealed by knotted thongs ; his soul afflicted by vigils and forced fasts ; no eye turned kindly on him ; everywhere the bent of his genius rudely contravened. However, it is the first property of genius to grow in spite of contradiction, and even by means thereof ;—as the vital germ pushes itself through the dull soil, and lives by what strove to bury it! Beppo, waxing into strength of bone and character, sets his face stiffly against persecution, and is not a whit disheartened. On *such* chastisements and chastisers he can look with a certain genial disdain. Beyond convent-walls, with their sour stupid shavelings, lies Palermo, lies the world ; here too is he, still alive,—though worse off than he wished ; and feels that the world is his oyster, which he (by chemical or other means) will one day open. Nay, we find there is a touch of grim Humour unfolds itself in the youth ; the surest sign, as is often said, of a character naturally great. Witness, for example, how he acts on this to his ardent temperament so trying occasion. While the monks sit at meat, the impetuous voracious Beppo (that stupid Inquisition-Biographer records it as a thing of course) is set not to eat with them, not to pick up the crumbs that fall from them, but to stand 'reading the Martyrology' for their pastime! The brave adjusts himself to

the inevitable. Beppo reads that dullest Martyrology of theirs; but reads out of it not what is printed there, but what his own vivid brain on the spur of the moment devises: instead of the names of Saints, all heartily indifferent to him, he reads out the names of the most notable Palermo 'unfortunate-females,' now beginning to interest him a little. What a 'deep world-irony,' as the Germans call it, lies here! The Monks, of course, felled him to the earth, and flayed him with scourges; but what did it avail? This only became apparent, to himself and them, that he had now outgrown their monk-discipline; as the Psyche does its chrysalis-shell, and bursts it. Giuseppe Balsamo bids farewell to Cartegirone forever and a day.

So now, by consent or not of the ghostly Benfratelli (Friars of *Mercy*, as they were named!), our Beppo has again returned to the maternal uncle at Palermo. The uncle naturally asked him, What he next meant to do? Beppo, after stammering and hesitating for some length of weeks, makes answer: Try Painting. Well and good! So Beppo gets him colours, brushes, fit tackle, and addicts himself for some space of time to the study of what is innocently called *Design*. Alas, if we consider Beppo's great Hunger, now that new senses were unfolding in him, how inadequate are the exiguous resources of Design; how necessary to attempt quite another deeper species of Design, of Designs! It is true, he lives with his uncle, has culinary meat; but where is the pocket-money for other costlier sorts of meats to come from? As the Kaiser Joseph was wont to say: From my head alone (*De ma tête seule*)!

The Roman Biographer, though a most wooden man, has incidentally thrown some light on Beppo's position at this juncture: both on his wants and his resources. As to the first, it appears (using the wooden man's phraseology) that he kept the 'worst company,' led the 'loosest life;' was hand-in-glove with all the swindlers, gamblers, idle apprentices, unfortunate-females, of Palermo: in the study and practice of Scoundrelism diligent beyond most. The genius which has burst asunder convent-walls, and other rubbish of impediments, now flames upward towards its mature splendour. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of so-called vicious enjoyment to be swallowed, there with hand and throat is Beppo Balsamo seen. He will be a Master, one day, in his profession. Not

indeed that he has yet quitted Painting, or even purposes so much: for the present, it is useful, indispensable, as a stalking-horse to the maternal uncle and neighbours; nay to himself,—for with all the ebullient impulses of scoundrel-genius restlessly seething in him, irrepressibly bursting through, he has the noble unconsciousness of genius; guesses not, dare not guess, that he is a born scoundrel, much less a born world-scoundrel.

But as for the other question, of his resources, these we perceive were several-fold, and continually extending. Not to mention any pictorial exiguities, which indeed existed chiefly in expectance,—there had almost accidentally arisen for him, in the first place, the resource of Pandering. He has a fair cousin living in the house with him, and she again has a lover; Beppo stations himself as go-between; delivers letters; fails not to drop hints that a lady, to be won or kept, must be generously treated; that such and such a pair of earrings, watch, necklace, or even sum of money, would work wonders; which valuables, adds the wooden Roman Biographer, 'he then appropriated furtively.' Like enough! Next, however, as another more lasting resource, he forges; at first in a small way, and trying his apprentice-hand: tickets for the theatre, and such trifles. Erelong, however, we see him fly at higher quarry; by practice he has acquired perfection in the great art of counterfeiting hands; and will exercise it on the large or on the narrow scale, for a consideration. Among his relatives is a Notary, with whom he can insinuate himself; for purpose of study, or even of practice. In the presses of this Notary lies a Will, which Beppo contrives to come at, and falsify 'for the benefit of a certain Religious House.' Much good may it do them! Many years afterwards the fraud was detected; but Beppo's benefit in it was spent and safe long before. Thus again the stolid Biographer expresses horror or wonder that he should have forged leave-of-absence for a monk, 'counterfeiting the signature of the Superior.' Why not? A forger must forge what is wanted of him: the Lion truly preys not on mice; yet shall he refuse such, if they jump into his mouth? Enough, the indefatigable Beppo has here opened a quite boundless mine; wherein through his whole life he will, as occasion calls, dig, at his convenience. Finally, he can predict fortunes and show visions,—by phosphorus and legerdemain. This, however, only

as a dilettantism ; to take-up the earnest profession of Magician does not yet enter into his views. Thus perfecting himself in all branches of his art, does our Balsamo live and grow. Stupid, pudding-faced as he looks and is, there is a vulpine astucity in him ; and then a wholeness, a heartiness, a kind of blubbery impetuosity, an oiliness so plausible-looking : give him only length of life, he will rise to the top of his profession.

Consistent enough with such blubbery impetuosity in Beppo is another fact we find recorded of him, that at this time he was found 'in most brawls,' whether in street or tavern. The way of his business led him into liability to such ; neither as yet had he learned prudence by age. Of choleric temper, with all his obesity ; a square-built, burly, vociferous fellow ; ever ready with his stroke (if victory seemed sure) ; nay, at bottom, not without a certain pig-like defensive-ferocity, perhaps even something more. Thus, when you find him making a point to attack, if possible, '*all* officers of justice,' and deforce them ; delivering the wretched from their talons : was not this, we say, a kind of dog-faithfulness, and public spirit, either of the mastiff or of the cur species ? Perhaps too there was a touch of that old Humour and 'world-irony' in it. One still more unquestionable feat he is recorded (we fear, on imperfect evidence) to have done : 'assassinated a canon.'

Remonstrances from growling maternal uncles could not fail ; threats, disdains from ill-affected neighbours ; tears from an expostulating widowed mother : these he shakes from him like dewdrops from the lion's mane. Still less could the Police neglect him ; him the visibly rising Professor of Swindlery ; the swashbuckler, to boot, and deforcer of bailiffs : he has often been captured, haled to their bar ; yet hitherto, by defect of evidence, by good luck, intercession of friends, been dismissed with admonition. Two things, nevertheless, might now be growing clear : first, that the die was cast with Beppo, and he a scoundrel for life ; second, that such a mixed, composite, crypto-scoundrel life could not endure, but must unfold itself into a pure, declared one. The Tree that is planted stands not still ; *must* pass through all its stages and phases, from the state of acorn to that of green leafy oak, of withered leafless oak ; to the state of felled timber, finally to that of firewood and ashes. Not less (though less visibly to dull eyes) the Act that

is done, the condition that has realised itself; above all things, the Man, with his Fortunes, that has been born. Beppo, everyway in vigorous vitality, cannot continue half-painting half-swindling in Palermo; must develop himself into whole swindler; and, unless hanged there, seek his bread elsewhere. What the proximate cause, or signal, of such crisis and development might be, no man could say; yet most men would have confidently guessed, The Police. Nevertheless it proved otherwise; not by the flaming sword of Justice, but by the rusty dirk of a foolish private individual, is Beppo driven forth.

Walking one day in the fields (as the bold historic Imagination will figure) with a certain ninny of a 'Goldsmith named Marano,' as they pass one of those rock-chasms frequent in the fair Island of Sicily, Beppo begins, in his oily, voluble way, to hint, That treasures often lay hid; that a Treasure lay hid *there*, as he knew by some pricking of his thumbs, divining-rod, or other talismanic monition: which Treasure might, by aid of science, courage, secrecy and a small judicious advance of money, be fortunately lifted. The gudgeon takes; advances, by degrees, to the length of 'sixty gold Ounces;'[2] sees magic circles drawn in the wane or in the full of the moon, blue (phosphorus) flames arise, split twigs auspiciously quiver; and at length—demands peremptorily that the Treasure be dug. A night is fixed on: the ninny Goldsmith, trembling with rapture and terror, breaks ground; digs, with thick breath and cold sweat, fiercely down, down, Beppo relieving him: the work advances; when, ah! at a certain stage of it (*before* fruition) hideous yells arise, a jingle like the emptying of Birmingham; six Devils pounce upon the poor sheep Goldsmith, and beat him almost to *mutton;* mercifully sparing Balsamo,—who indeed has himself summoned them thither, and as it were created them (with goatskins and burnt cork). Marano, though a ninny, now knew how it lay; and furthermore that he had a stiletto. One of the grand drawbacks of swindler-genius! You accomplish the Problem; and then—the Elementary Quantities, Algebraic Symbols you worked on, will fly in your face!

Hearing of stilettos, our Algebraist begins to look around him, and view his empire of Palermo in the concrete. An empire now much exhausted; much infested, too, with sorrows of

[2] The Sicilian Ounce (*Onza*) is worth about ten shillings sterling.

all kinds, and every day the more; nigh ruinous, in short; not worth being stabbed for. There is a world elsewhere. In any case, the young Raven has now shed his pens, and got fledged for flying. Shall he not spurn the whole from him, and soar off? Resolved, performed! Our Beppo quits Palermo; and, as it proved, on a long voyage: or, as the Inquisition-Biographer has it, 'he fled from Palermo, and overran the whole Earth.'

Here, then, ends the First Act of Count Alessandro Cagliostro's Life-drama. Let the curtain drop; and hang unrent, before an audience of mixed feeling, till the First of August.

FLIGHT LAST.

BEFORE entering on the second Section of Count Beppo's History, the Editor will indulge in a philosophical reflection.

This Beppic Hegira, or Flight from Palermo, we have now arrived at, brings us down, in European History, to somewhere about the epoch of the Peace of Paris. Old Feudal Europe, while Beppo flies forth into the whole Earth, has just finished the last of her 'tavern-brawls,' or wars; and lain down to doze, and yawn, and disconsolately wear-off the headaches, bruises, nervous prostration and flaccidity consequent thereon: for the brawl had been a long one, *Seven Years* long; and there had been many such, begotten, as is usual, of intoxication from Pride or other Devil's-drink, and foul humours in the constitution. Alas, it was not so much a disconsolate doze, after ebriety and quarrel, that poor old Feudal Europe had now to undergo, and then on awakening to drink anew, and quarrel anew: old Feudal Europe has fallen a-dozing to die! Her next awakening will be with no tavern-brawl, at the *King's Head* or *Prime Minister* tavern; but with the stern Avatar of DEMOCRACY, hymning its world-thrilling birth- and battle-song in the distant West;—therefrom to go out conquering and to conquer, till it have made a circuit of all the Earth, and old dead Feudal Europe is born again (after infinite pangs!) into a new Industrial one. At Beppo's Hegira, as we said, Europe was in the last languor and stertorous fever-sleep of Dissolution; alas, with

us, and with our sons for a generation or two, it is almost still worse,—were it not that in Birth-throes there is ever hope, in Death-throes the final departure of hope.

Now the philosophic reflection we were to indulge in, was no other than this, most germane to our subject: the portentous extent of Quackery, the multitudinous variety of Quacks that, along with our Beppo, and under him each in his degree, overran all Europe during that same period, the latter half of last century. It was the very age of impostors, cut-purses, swindlers, double-goers, enthusiasts, ambiguous persons; quacks simple, quacks compound; crackbrained, or with deceit prepense; quacks and quackeries of all colours and kinds. How many Mesmerists, Magicians, Cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Crucified Nuns, and Devils of Loudun! To which the Inquisition-Biographer adds Vampires, Sylphs, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and an *Etcetera*. Consider your Schröpfers, Cagliostros, Casanovas, Saint-Germains, Dr. Grahams; the Chevalier d'Eon, Psalmanazar, Abbé Paris and the Ghost of Cocklane! As if Bedlam had broken loose; as if, rather, in that 'spiritual Twelfth-hour of the night,' the everlasting Pit had opened itself, and from *its* still blacker bosom had issued Madness and all manner of shapeless Misbirths, to masquerade and chatter there.

But indeed, if we consider, how could it be otherwise? In that stertorous last fever-sleep of our European world, must not Phantasms enough, born of the Pit, as all such *are*, flit past, in ghastly masquerading and chattering? A low scarce-audible moan (in Parliamentary Petitions, Meal-mobs, Popish Riots, Treatises on Atheism) struggles from the moribund sleeper; frees him not from his hellish guests and saturnalia: Phantasms these 'of a dying brain.' So too, when the old Roman world, the measure of its iniquities being full, was to expire, and (in still bitterer agonies) be born again, had they not Veneficæ, Mathematici, Apolloniuses with the Golden Thigh, Apollonius' Asses, and False Christs enough,—before a REDEEMER arose!

For, in truth, and altogether apart from such half-figurative language, Putrescence is not more naturally the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. Nay, look at it with the eye of the mere Logician, of the Political Economist. In such periods

of Social Decay, what is called an overflowing Population, that is a Population which, under the old Captains of Industry (named Higher Classes, *Ricos Hombres*, Aristocracies and the like), can no longer find work and wages, increases the number of Unprofessionals, Lackalls, Social Nondescripts; with appetite of utmost keenness, which there is no known method of satisfying. Nay more, and perversely enough, ever as Population augments, your Captains of Industry can and do dwindle more and more into Captains of Idleness; whereby the more and more overflowing Population is worse and worse governed (shown *what to do*, for that is the only government): thus is the candle lighted at both ends; and the number of social Nondescripts increases in *double*-quick ratio. Whoso is alive, it is said, 'must live;' at all events, will live; a task which daily gets harder, reduces to stranger shifts.

And now furthermore, with general economic distress, in such a Period, there is usually conjoined the utmost decay of moral principle: indeed, so universal is this conjunction, many men have seen it to be a concatenation and causation; justly enough, except that such have very generally, ever since a certain religious-repentant feeling went out of date, committed one sore mistake: what is vulgarly called putting the cart before the horse. Politico-economical benefactor of the species! deceive not thyself with barren sophisms: National suffering *is*, if thou wilt understand the words, verily a 'judgment of God;' has ever been preceded by national crime. 'Be it here 'once more maintained before the world,' cries Sauerteig, in one of his *Springwurzeln*, 'that temporal Distress, that Misery 'of any kind, is not the *cause* of Immorality, but the effect 'thereof! Among individuals, it is true, so wide is the em-'pire of Chance, poverty and wealth go all at hap-hazard; a 'St. Paul is making tents at Corinth, while a Kaiser Nero 'fiddles, in ivory palaces, over a burning Rome. Nevertheless 'here too, if nowise wealth and poverty, yet well-being and ill-'being, even in the temporal economic sense, go commonly in 'respective partnership with Wisdom and with Folly: no man 'can, for a length of time, be wholly wretched, if there is not 'a disharmony (a folly and wickedness) within himself; nei-'ther can the richest Crœsus and never so eupeptic (for he 'too has his indigestions, and dies at last of surfeit), be other

'than discontented, perplexed, unhappy, if he be a Fool.'—This we apprehend is true, O Sauerteig, yet not the whole truth: for there is more than day's-work and day's-wages in this world of ours: which, as thou knowest, is itself quite other than a 'Workshop and Fancy-Bazaar,' is also a 'Mystic Temple and Hall of Doom.' Thus we have heard of such things as good men struggling with adversity, and offering a spectacle for the very gods.

'But with a nation,' continues he, 'where the multitude 'of the chances covers, in great measure, the uncertainty of 'Chance, it may be said to hold always that general Suffering 'is the fruit of general Misbehaviour, general Dishonesty. Con-'sider it well; had all men stood faithfully to their posts, the 'Evil, when it first rose, had been manfully fronted, and abo-'lished, not lazily blinked, and left to grow, with the foul slug-'gard's comfort: "It will last my time." Thou foul sluggard, and 'even thief (*Faulenzer, ja Dieb*)! For art thou not a thief, to 'pocket thy day's-wages (be they counted in *groschen* or in gold 'thousands) for this, if it be for anything, for watching on thy 'special watch-tower that God's City (which this His World 'is, where His children dwell) suffer no damage; and, all the 'while, to watch only that thy own ease be not invaded,—let 'otherwise hard come to hard as it will and can? Unhappy! 'It will last thy time: thy worthless sham of an existence, 'wherein nothing but the Digestion was real, will have eva-'porated in the interim; it will last thy time: but will it last 'thy *Eternity?* Or what if it should *not* last thy time (mark 'that also, for that also will be the fate of *some* such lying 'sluggard), but take fire, and explode, and consume thee like 'the moth!'

The sum of the matter, in any case, is, that national Poverty and national Dishonesty go together; that continually increasing social Nondescripts get ever the hungrier, ever the falser. Now say, have we not here the very making of Quackery; raw-material, plastic-energy, both in full action? Dishonesty the raw-material, Hunger the plastic-energy: what will not the two realise? Nay observe farther how Dishonesty is the raw-material not of Quacks only, but also in great part of Dupes. In Goodness, were it never so simple, there is the surest instinct for the Good; the uneasiest unconquerable repulsion for the

False and Bad. The very Devil Mephistopheles cannot deceive poor guileless Margaret: 'it stands written on his brow that he never loved a living soul!' The like too has many a human inferior Quack painfully experienced; the like lies in store for our hero Beppo. But now with such abundant raw-material not only to make Quacks of, but to feed and occupy them on, if the plastic-energy of Hunger fail not, what a world shall we have! The wonder is not that the eighteenth century had very numerous Quacks, but rather that they were not innumerable.

In that same French Revolution alone, which burnt-up so much, what unmeasured masses of Quackism were set fire to; nay, as foul mephitic fire-damp in that case, were made to flame in a fierce, sublime *splendour;* coruscating, even illuminating! The Count Saint-Germain, some twenty years later, had found a quite new element, of Fraternisation, Sacred right of Insurrection, Oratorship of the Human Species, wherefrom to body himself forth quite otherwise: Schröpfer needed not now, as Blackguard undeterred, have solemnly shot himself in the *Rosenthal;* might have solemnly sacrificed himself, as Jacobin half-heroic, in the *Place de la Révolution.* For your quack-genius is indeed born, but also made; circumstances shape him or stunt him. Beppo Balsamo, born British in these new days, could have conjured fewer Spirits; yet had found a living and glory, as Castlereagh Spy, Irish Associationist, Blacking-Manufacturer, Book-Publisher, Able Editor. Withal too the reader will observe that Quacks, in every time, are of two sorts: the Declared Quack; and the Undeclared, who, if you question him, will deny stormfully, both to others and to himself; of which two quack-species the proportions vary with the varying capacity of the age. If Beppo's was the age of the Declared, therein, after all French Revolutions, we will grant, lay one of its main distinctions from ours; which is it not yet, and for a generation or two, the age of the Undeclared? Alas, almost a still more detestable age;—yet now (by God's grace), with Prophecy, with irreversible Enactment, registered in Heaven's chancery,—where *thou* too, if thou wilt *look*, mayst read and know, That its death-doom shall not linger. Be it speedy, be it sure!—And so herewith were our philosophical reflection, on the nature, causes, prevalence, decline and expected tem-

porary destruction of Quackery, concluded; and now the Beppic poetic Narrative can once more take its course.

Beppo, then, like a Noah's Raven, is out upon that watery waste of dissolute, beduped, distracted European Life, to see if there is any carrion there. One unguided little Raven, in the wide-weltering 'Mother of dead Dogs:' will he not come to harm; will he not be snapt-up, drowned, starved and washed to the Devil there? No fear of him,—for a time. His eye (or scientific judgment), it is true, as yet takes-in only a small section of it; but then his scent (instinct of genius) is prodigious: several endowments, forgery and others, he has unfolded into talents; the two sources of all quack-talent, Cunning and Impudence, are his in richest measure.

As to his immediate course of action and adventure, the foolish Inquisition-Biographer, it must be owned, shows himself a fool, and can give us next to no insight. Like enough, Beppo 'fled to Messina;' simply as to the nearest city, and to get across to the mainland: but as to this 'certain Althotas' whom he met there, and voyaged with to Alexandria in Egypt, and how they made hemp into silk, and realised much money, and came to Malta, and studied in the Laboratory there, and then the certain Althotas died, — of all this what shall be said? The foolish Inquisition-Biographer is uncertain whether the certain Althotas was a Greek or a Spaniard: but unhappily the prior question is not settled, whether he *was* at all. Superfluous it seems to put down Beppo's own account of his procedure; he gave multifarious accounts, as the exigencies of the case demanded: this of the 'certain Althotas,' and hemp made into false silk, is as verisimilar as that other of the 'sage Althotas,' the heirship-apparent of Trebisond, and the Scherif of Mecca's "Adieu, unfortunate Child of Nature." Nay the guesses of the ignorant world; how Count Cagliostro had been travelling-tutor to a Prince (name not given), whom he murdered and took the money from; with others of the like,—were perhaps still more absurd. Beppo, we can see, was out and away,—the Devil knew whither. Far, variegated, painful might his roamings be. A plausible-looking shadow of him shows itself hovering over Naples and Calabria; thither, as to a famed high-school of Laziness and Scoundrelism, he may likely enough

have gone to graduate. Of the Malta Laboratory, and Alexandrian hemp-silk, the less we say the better. This only is clear: That Beppo dived deep down into the lugubrious-obscure regions of Rascaldom; like a Knight to the palace of his Fairy; remained unseen there, and returned thence armed at all points.

If we fancy, meanwhile, that Beppo already meditated becoming Grand Cophta, and riding at Strasburg in the Cardinal's carriage, we mistake much. Gift of Prophecy has been wisely denied to man. Did a man *foresee* his life, and not merely *hope* it, and grope it, and so, by Necessity and Freewill, make and fabricate it into a reality, he were no *man*, but some other kind of creature, superhuman or subterhuman. No man sees far; the most see no farther than their noses. From the quite dim uncertain mass of the future, 'which lies there,' says a Scottish Humorist, 'uncombed, uncarded, like a mass of '*tarry wool* proverbially *ill to spin*,' they spin out, better or worse, their rumply, infirm thread of Existence, and wind it up, up,—till the spool is *full;* seeing but some little half-yard of it at once; exclaiming, as they look into the betarred entangled mass of Futurity, We *shall* see!

The first authentic fact with regard to Beppo is, that his swart squat figure becomes visible in the Corso and Campo Vaccino of Rome; that he 'lodges at the Sign of the Sun in the Rotonda,' and sells pen-drawings there. Properly they are not pen-drawings; but printed engravings or etchings, to which Beppo, with a pen and a little Indian ink, has added the degree of scratching to give them the air of such. Thereby mainly does he realise a thin livelihood. From which we infer that his transactions in Naples and Calabria, with Althotas and hemp-silk, or whatever else, had not turned to much.

Forged pen-drawings are no mine of wealth: neither was Beppo Balsamo anything of an Adonis; on the contrary, a most dusky, bull-necked, mastiff-faced, sinister-looking individual: nevertheless, on applying for the favour of the hand of Lorenza Feliciani, a beautiful Roman donzella, 'dwelling near the Trinity of the Pilgrims,' the unfortunate child of Nature prospers beyond our hopes. Authorities differ as to the rank and status of this fair Lozenza: one account says, she was the daughter of a Girdle-maker; but adds erroneously that it was in Calabria. The matter must remain suspended. Certain enough,

she was a handsome buxom creature; 'both pretty and lady-like,' it is presumable; but having no offer, in a country too prone to celibacy, took-up with the bull-necked forger of pen-drawings, whose suit too was doubtless pressed with the most flowing rhetoric. She gave herself in marriage to him; and the parents admitted him to quarter in their house, till it should appear what was next to be done.

Two kitchen-fires, says the Proverb, burn not on one hearth: here, moreover, might be quite special causes of discord. Pen-drawing, at best a hungry concern, has now exhausted itself, and must be given up; but Beppo's household prospects brighten, on the other side: in the charms of his Lorenza he sees before him what the French call 'a Future confused and immense.' The hint was given; and, with reluctance, or without reluctance (for the evidence leans *both* ways), was taken and reduced to practice: Signor and Signora Balsamo are forth from the old Girdler's house, into the wide world, seeking and finding adventures.

The foolish Inquisition-Biographer, with painful scientific accuracy, furnishes a descriptive catalogue of all the successive Cullies (Italian Counts, French Envoys, Spanish Marquises, Dukes and Drakes) in various quarters of the known world, whom this accomplished pair took-in; with the sums each yielded, and the methods employed to bewitch him. Into which descriptive catalogue, why should we here so much as cast a glance? Cullies, the easy cushions on which knaves and knavesses repose and fatten, have at all times existed, in considerable profusion: neither can the fact of a clothed animal, Marquis or other, having acted in that capacity to never such lengths, entitle him to mention in History. We pass over these. Beppo, or as we must now learn to call him, the Count, appears at Venice, at Marseilles, at Madrid, Cadiz, Lisbon, Brussels; makes scientific pilgrimage to Quack Saint-Germain in Westphalia, religious-commercial to Saint Saint-James in Compostella, to Our Lady in Loretto: south, north, east, west, he shows himself; finds everywhere Lubricity and Stupidity (better or worse provided with cash), the two elements on which he thaumaturgically can work and live. Practice makes perfection; Beppo too was an apt scholar. By all methods he can awaken the stagnant imagination; cast maddening powder in the eyes.

Already in Rome he has cultivated whiskers, and put-on

the uniform of a Prussian Colonel: dame Lorenza is fair to look upon; but how much fairer, if by the air of distance and dignity you lend enchantment to her! In other places, the Count appears as real Count; as Marquis Pellegrini (lately from foreign parts); as Count this and Count that, Count Proteus-Incognito; finally as Count Alessandro Cagliostro.[1] Figure him shooting through the world with utmost rapidity; ducking-under here, when the sword-fishes of Justice make a dart at him; ducking-up yonder, in new shape, at the distance of a thousand miles; not unprovided with forged vouchers of respectability; above all, with that best voucher of respectability, a four-horse carriage, beef-eaters, and open purse, for Count Cagliostro has ready-money and pays his way. At some Hotel of the Sun, Hotel of the Angel, Gold Lion, or Green Goose, or whatever Hotel it is, in whatever world-famous capital City, his chariot-wheels have rested; sleep and food have refreshed his live-stock, chiefly the pearl and soul thereof, his indispensable Lorenza, now no longer Dame Lorenza, but Countess Seraphina, looking seraphic enough! Moneyed Do-nothings, whereof in this vexed Earth there are many, ever lounging about such places, scan and comment on the foreign coat-of-arms; ogle the fair foreign woman; who timidly recoils from their gaze, timidly responds to their reverences, as in halls and passages, they obsequiously throw themselves in her way: erelong one moneyed Donothing, from amid his tags and tassels, sword-belts, fop-tackle, frizzled hair without brains beneath it, is heard speaking to another: "Seen the Countess?—Divine creature that!"—and so the game is begun.

Let not the too sanguine reader, meanwhile, fancy that it is all holiday and heyday with his Lordship. The course of scoundrelism, any more than that of true love, never did run smooth. Seasons there may be when Count Proteus-Incognito has his epaulettes torn from his shoulders; his garment-skirts clipt close by the buttocks; and is bid sternly tarry at Jericho till his beard be grown. Harpies of Law defile his solemn feasts; his light burns languid; for a space seems utterly snuffed out, and dead in malodorous vapour. Dead only to

[1] Not altogether an *invention* this last; for his granduncle (a bellfounder at Messina?) was actually surnamed *Cagliostro*, as well as named *Giuseppe*. —O. Y.

blaze up the brighter! There is scoundrel-life in Beppo Cagliostro.; cast him among the mud, tread him out of sight there, the miasmata do but stimulate and refresh him, he rises sneezing, is strong and young again.

Behold him, for example, again in Palermo, after having seen many men and many lands; and how he again escapes thence. Why did he return to Palermo? Perhaps to astonish old friends by new grandeur; or for temporary shelter, if the Continent were getting hot for him; or perhaps in the mere way of general trade. He is seized there, and clapt in prison, for those foolish old businesses of the treasure-digging Goldsmith, of the forged Will.

'The manner of his escape,' says one, whose few words on this obscure matter are so many light-points for us, 'deserves to be described. The Son of one of the first Sicilian Princes, and great landed Proprietors (who moreover had filled important stations at the Neapolitan Court), was a person that united with a strong body and ungovernable temper all the tyrannical caprice, which the rich and great, without cultivation, think themselves entitled to exhibit.

'Donna Lorenza had contrived to gain this man; and on him the fictitious Marchese Pellegrini founded his security. The Prince testified openly that he was the protector of this stranger pair: but what was his fury when Joseph Balsamo, at the instance of those whom he had cheated, was cast into prison! He tried various means to deliver him; and as these would not prosper, he publicly, in the President's antechamber, threatened the plaintiffs' Advocate with the frightfulest misusage if the suit were not dropt, and Balsamo forthwith set at liberty. As the Advocate declined such proposal, he clutched him, beat him, threw him on the floor, trampled him with his feet, and could hardly be restrained from still farther outrages, when the President himself came running out at the tumult, and commanded peace.

'This latter, a weak, dependent man, made no attempt to punish the injurer; the plaintiffs and their Advocate grew fainthearted; and Balsamo was let go; not so much as a registration in the Court-Books specifying his dismissal, who occasioned it, or how it took place.'[2]

Thus sometimes, a friend in the court is better than a penny in the purse! Marchese Pellegrini 'quickly thereafter 'left Palermo, and performed various travels, whereof my 'author could impart no clear information.' Whether, or how far, the Game-chicken Prince went with him is not hinted.

So it might, at times, be quite otherwise than in coach-

[2] Goethe's *Werke*, b. xxviii. 132.

and-four that our Cagliostro journeyed. Occasionally we find him as outrider journeying on horseback; only Seraphina and her sop (whom she is to suck and eat) lolling on carriage-cushions; the hardy Count glad that hereby he can have the shot paid. Nay sometimes he looks utterly poverty-struck, and has to journey one knows not how. Thus one briefest but authentic-looking glimpse of him presents itself in England, in the year 1772: no Count is he here, but mere Signor Balsamo again; engaged in house-painting, for which he has a most peculiar talent. Was it true that he painted the country-house of 'a Doctor Benemore;' and having not painted, but only smeared it, was refused payment, and got a lawsuit with expenses instead? If Doctor Benemore have left any representatives in this Earth, they are desired to speak out. We add only, that if young Beppo had one of the prettiest wives, old Benemore had one of the ugliest daughters; and so, putting one thing to another, matters might not be so bad.

For it is to be observed, that the Count, on his own side, even in his days of highest splendour, is not idle. Faded dames of quality have many wants: the Count has not studied in the convent Laboratory, or pilgrimed to the Count Saint-Germain, in Westphalia, to no purpose. With loftiest condescension he stoops to impart somewhat of his supernatural secrets,—for a consideration. Rowland's Kalydor is valuable; but what to the Beautifying-water of Count Alessandro! He that will undertake to smooth wrinkles, and make withered green parchment into a fair carnation skin, is he not one whom faded dames of quality will delight to honour? Or again, let the Beautifying-water succeed or not, have not such dames, if calumny may be in aught believed, *another* want? This want, too, the indefatigable Cagliostro will supply,—for a consideration. For faded gentlemen of quality the Count likewise has help. Not a charming Countess alone; but a 'Wine of Egypt' (cantharides not being unknown to him), sold in drops, more precious than nectar; which what faded gentleman of quality would not purchase with anything short of life? Consider now what may be done with potions, washes, charms, love-philtres, among a class of mortals, idle from the mother's womb; rejoicing to be taught the Ionic dances, and meditating of love from their tender nails!

Thus waxing, waning, broad-shining, or extinct, an inconstant but unwearied Moon, rides on its course the Cagliostric star. Thus are Count and Countess busy in their vocation; thus do they spend the golden season of their youth,—shall we say, 'for the Greatest Happiness of the greatest number'? Happy enough, had there been no sumptuary or adultery or swindlery Law-acts; no Heaven above, no Hell beneath; no flight of Time, and gloomy land of Eld and Destitution and Desperation, towards which, by law of Fate, they see themselves, at all moments, with frightful regularity, unaidably drifting.

The prudent man provides against the inevitable. Already Count Cagliostro, with his love-philtres, his cantharidic Wine of Egypt; nay far earlier, by his blue-flames and divining-rods, as with the poor sheep Goldsmith of Palermo; and ever since, by many a significant hint thrown out where the scene suited, —has dabbled in the Supernatural. As his seraphic Countess gives signs of withering, and one luxuriant branch of industry will die and drop off, others must be pushed into budding. Whether it was in England during what he called his 'first visit' in the year 1776 (for the before-first, house-smearing visit was, reason or none, to go for nothing) that he first thought of Prophecy as a trade, is unknown: certain enough, he had begun to practise it then; and this indeed not without a glimpse of insight into the English national character. Various, truly, are the pursuits of mankind; whereon they would fain, unfolding the future, take Destiny by surprise: with us, however, as a nation of shopkeepers, they may be all said to centre in this one, *Put money in thy purse!* O for a Fortunatus'-Pocket, with its ever-new coined gold;—if, indeed, the true prayer were not rather: O for a Crassus'-Drink, of *liquid* gold, that so the accursed throat of Avarice might for once have enough and to spare! Meanwhile whoso should engage, keeping clear of the gallows, to teach men the secret of making money, were not he a Professor sure of audience? Strong were the general Scepticism; still stronger the general Need and Greed. Count Cagliostro, from his residence in Whitcombe Street, it is clear, had looked into the mysteries of the Little-go; by occult science knew the lucky number. Bish as yet was not; but Lotteries were; gulls also were. The Count has his Language-master,

his Portuguese Jew, his nondescript Ex-Jesuits, whom he puts forth as antennæ, into coffee-houses, to stir-up the minds of men. 'Lord' Scott (a swindler swindled), and Miss Fry, and many others, were they here, could tell what it cost them: nay, the very Lawbooks, and Lord Mansfield and Mr. Howarth speak of hundreds, and jewel-boxes, and quite handsome booties. Thus can the bustard pluck geese, and, if Law do get the carcass, live upon their giblets;—now and then, however, finds a vulture, too tough to pluck.

The attentive reader is no doubt curious to understand all the What and the How of Cagliostro's procedure while England was the scene. As we too are, and have been; but unhappily all in vain. To that English *Life* of uncertain gender none, as was said, need in their utmost extremity repair. Scarcely the very lodging of Cagliostro can be ascertained; except incidentally that it was once in Whitcombe Street; for a few days, in Warwick Court, Holborn; finally, for some space, in the King's Bench Jail. Vain were it, meanwhile, for any reverencer of genius to pilgrim thither, seeking memorials of a great man. Cagliostro is clean gone: on the strictest search, no token never so faint discloses itself. He went, and left nothing behind him;—except perhaps a few cast-clothes, and other inevitable exuviæ, long since, not indeed annihilated (this nothing can be), yet beaten into mud, and spread as new soil over the general surface of Middlesex and Surrey; floated by the Thames into old Ocean; or flitting, the gaseous parts of them, in the universal Atmosphere, borne thereby to remotest corners of the Earth, or beyond the limits of the Solar System! So fleeting is the track and habitation of man; so wondrous the stuff he builds of; his house, his very house of houses (what we call his *body*), were he the first of geniuses, will evaporate in the strangest manner, and vanish even whither we have said.

To us on our side, however, it is cheering to discover, for one thing, that Cagliostro found antagonists worthy of him: the bustard plucking geese, and living on their giblets, found not our whole Island peopled with geese, but here and there, as above hinted, with vultures, with hawks of still sharper quality than his. Priddle, Aylett, Saunders, O'Reilly: let these stand forth as the vindicators of English national character. By whom Count Alessandro Cagliostro, as in dim fluctuating

outline indubitably appears, was bewritted, arrested, fleeced, hatchelled, bewildered and bedevilled, till the very Jail of King's Bench seemed a refuge from them. A wholly obscure contest, as was natural; wherein, however, to all candid eyes the vulturous and falconish character of our Isle fully asserts itself; and the foreign Quack of Quacks, with all his thaumaturgic Hemp-silks, Lottery-numbers, Beauty-waters, Seductions, Phosphorus-boxes, and Wines of Egypt, is seen matched, and nigh throttled, by the natural unassisted cunning of English Attorneys. Whereupon the bustard, feeling himself so pecked and plucked, takes wing, and flies to foreign parts.

One good thing he has carried with him, notwithstanding: initiation into some primary arcana of Freemasonry. The Quack of Quacks, with his primitive bias towards the supernatural-mystificatory, must long have had his eye on Masonry; which, with its blazonry and mummery, sashes, drawn sabres, brothers Terrible, brothers Venerable (the whole so imposing by candle-light), offered the choicest element for him. All men profit by *Union* with men; the quack as much as another; nay in these two words, *Sworn Secrecy*, alone has he not found a very talisman! Cagliostro, then, determines on Masonship. It was afterwards urged that the Lodge to which he and his Seraphina got admission, for she also was made a Mason, or Masoness, and had a riband-garter solemnly bound on, with order to sleep in it for a night,—was a Lodge of low rank in the social scale; numbering not a few of the pastry-cook and hairdresser species. To which it could only be replied, that these alone spoke French; that a man and mason, though he cooked pastry, was still a man and mason. Be this as it might, the apt Recipiendary is rapidly promoted through the three grades of Apprentice, Companion, Master; at the cost of five guineas. That of his being first raised into the air, by means of a rope and pulley fixed in the ceiling, 'during which the heavy mass of his body must assuredly have 'caused him a dolorous sensation;' and then being forced blindfold to shoot himself (though with privily *dis*loaded pistol), in sign of courage and obedience: all this we can esteem an apocrypha,—palmed on the Roman Inquisition, otherwise prone to delusion. Five guineas, and some foolish froth-speeches, delivered over liquor and otherwise, was the cost. If you ask

now, In *what* London Lodge was it? Alas, we know not, and shall never know. Certain only that Count Alessandro *is* a master-mason; that having once crossed the threshold, his plastic genius will not stop there. Behold, accordingly, he has bought from a 'Bookseller' certain manuscripts belonging to 'one George Cofton, a man absolutely unknown to him' and to us, which treat of the 'Egyptian Masonry'! In other words, Count Alessandro will *blow* with his new five-guinea bellows; having always occasion to raise the wind.

With regard specially to that huge soap-bubble of an Egyptian Masonry which he blew, and as conjuror caught many flies with, it is our painful duty to say a little; not much. The Inquisition-Biographer, with deadly fear of heretical and democratical and black-magical Freemasons before his eyes, has gone into the matter to boundless depths; commenting, elucidating, even confuting: a certain expository masonic Order-Book of Cagliostro's, which he has laid hand on, opens the whole mystery to him. The ideas he declares to be Cagliostro's; the composition all a Disciple's, for the Count had no gift that way. What, then, does the Disciple set forth,—or, at lowest, the Inquisition-Biographer say that he sets forth? Much, much that is not to the point.

Understand, however, that once inspired, by the absolutely unknown George Cofton, with the notion of Egyptian Masonry, wherein as yet lay much 'magic and superstition,' Count Alessandro resolves to free it of these impious ingredients, and make it a kind of Last Evangel, or Renovator of the Universe, —which so needed renovation. 'As he did not believe anything in matter of Faith,' says our wooden Familiar, 'nothing could arrest him.' True enough: how did he move along, then; to what length did he go?

'In his system he promises his followers to conduct them to *perfection*, by means of a *physical and moral regeneration;* to enable them by the former (or physical) to find the *prime matter*, or Philosopher's Stone, and the *acacia* which consolidates in man the forces of the most vigorous youth, and renders him immortal; and by the latter (or moral) to procure them a Pentagon, which shall restore man to his primitive state of innocence, lost by original sin. The Founder supposes that this Egyptian Masonry was instituted by Enoch and Elias, who propagated it in different parts of the world: however, in time it lost much of its purity and splendour. And so, by degrees, the Masonry of men

had been reduced to pure buffoonery; and that of women being almost entirely destroyed, having now for most part no place in common Masonry. Till at last, the zeal of the *Grand Cophta* (so are the High-priests of Egypt named) had signalised itself by restoring the Masonry of both sexes to its pristine lustre.'

With regard to the great question of constructing this invaluable Pentagon, which is to abolish Original Sin: how you have to choose a solitary mountain, and call it Sinai; and build a Pavilion on it to be named Sion, with twelve sides, in every side a window, and three stories, one of which is named Ararat; and there, with Twelve Masters, each at a window, yourself in the middle of them, to go through unspeakable formalities, vigils, removals, fasts, toils, distresses, and hardly get your Pentagon after all,—with regard to this great question and construction, we shall say nothing. As little concerning the still grander and painfuller process of Physical Regeneration, or growing young again; a thing not to be accomplished without a forty-days course of medicine, purgations, sweating-baths, fainting-fits, root-diet, phlebotomy, starvation and desperation, more perhaps than it is all worth. Leaving these interior solemnities, and many high moral precepts of union, virtue, wisdom, and doctrines of immortality and what not, will the reader care to cast an indifferent glance on certain esoteric ceremonial parts of this Egyptian Masonry,—as the Inquisition-Biographer, if we miscellaneously cull from him, may enable us?

'In all these ceremonial parts,' huskily avers the wooden Biographer, 'you find as much sacrilege, profanation, superstition and idolatry, as in common Masonry: invocations of the holy Name, prosternations, adorations lavished on the Venerable, or head of the Lodge; aspirations, insufflations, incense-burnings, fumigations, exorcisms of the Candidates and the garments they are to take; emblems of the sacrosanct Triad, of the Moon, of the Sun, of the Compass, Square, and a thousand-thousand other iniquities and ineptitudes, which are now well known in the world.'

'We above made mention of the Grand Cophta. By this title has been designated the founder or restorer of Egyptian Masonry. Cagliostro made no difficulty in admitting' (to me the Inquisitor) 'that under such name he was himself meant: now in this system the Grand Cophta is compared to the Highest: the most solemn acts of worship are paid him; he has authority over the Angels; he is invoked on all occasions; everything is done in virtue of his power; which you are assured he

derives immediately from God. Nay more: among the various rites observed in this exercise of Masonry, you are ordered to recite the *Veni Creator spiritus*, the *Te Deum*, and some Psalms of David: to such an excess is impudence and audacity carried, that in the Psalm, *Memento, Domine, David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus*, every time the name David occurs, that of the Grand Cophta is to be substituted.

'No religion is excluded from the Egyptian Society: the Jew, the Calvinist, the Lutheran, can be admitted equally well with the Catholic, if so be they admit the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.' 'The men elevated to the rank of master take the names of the ancient Prophets; the women those of the Sibyls.'

* * 'Then the grand Mistress blows on the face of the female Recipiendary, all along from brow to chin, and says: "I give you this breath, to cause to germinate and become alive in your heart the Truth which we possess; to fortify in you the" &c. &c. "Guardian of the new Knowledge which we prepare to make you partake of, by the sacred names of *Helios, Mene, Tetragrammaton.*"

'In the *Essai sur les Illuminés*, printed at Paris in 1789, I read that these latter words were suggested to Cagliostro as Arabic or Sacred ones by a Sleight-of-hand Man, who said that he was assisted by a spirit, and added that this spirit was the Soul of a Cabalist Jew, who by art-magic had killed his pig before the Christian Advent.'

* * 'They take a young lad, or a girl who is in the state of innocence, such they call the *Pupil* or the *Columb*; the Venerable communicates to him the power he would have had before the Fall of Man; which power consists mainly in commanding the pure Spirits; these Spirits are to the number of seven: it is said they surround the Throne; and that they govern the Seven Planets: their names are Anael, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Zobiachel, Anachiel.'

Or would the reader wish to see this *Columb* in action? She can act in two ways; either behind a curtain, behind a hieroglyphically-painted Screen with 'table and three candles;' or as here 'before the Caraffe,' and showing face. If the miracle fail, it can only be because she is not 'in the state of innocence,'—an accident much to be guarded against. This scene is at Mittau in Courland;—we find, indeed, that it is a *Pupil* affair, not a *Columb* one; but for the rest, that is perfectly indifferent:

'Cagliostro accordingly (it is his own story still) brought a little Boy into the Lodge; son of a nobleman there. He placed him on his knees before a table, whereon stood a Bottle of pure water, and behind this some lighted candles: he made an exorcism round the Boy, put his hand on his head: and both, in this attitude, addressed their prayers to God for the happy accomplishment of the work. Having then bid the child look into the Bottle, directly the child cried that he saw a

garden. Knowing hereby that Heaven assisted him, Cagliostro took courage, and bade the child ask of God the grace to see the Angel Michael. At first the child said: "I see something white; I know not what it is." Then he began jumping, stamping like a possessed creature, and cried: "There now! I see a child, like myself, that seems to have something angelical." All the assembly, and Cagliostro himself, remained speechless with emotion. * * * The child being anew exorcised, with the hands of the Venerable on his head, and the customary prayers addressed to Heaven, he looked into the Bottle, and said, he saw his Sister at that moment coming down stairs, and embracing one of her brothers. That appeared impossible, the brother in question being then hundreds of miles off: however, Cagliostro felt not disconcerted; said they might send to the country-house where the sister was, and see.'[3]

Wonderful enough. Here, however, a fact rather suddenly transpires, which, as the Inquisition-Biographer well urges, must serve to undeceive all believers in Cagliostro; at least, call a blush into their cheeks. It seems: 'The Grand Cophta, 'the restorer, the propagator of Egyptian Masonry, Count Cag-'liostro himself, testifies, in most part of his System, the pro-'foundest respect for the Patriarch Moses: *and yet* this same 'Cagliostro affirmed before his judges that he had always felt 'the insurmountablest antipathy to Moses; and attributes this 'hatred to his constant opinion, that Moses was a thief for hav-'ing carried-off the Egyptian vessels; which opinion, in spite 'of all the luminous arguments that were opposed to him to 'show how erroneous it was, he has continued to hold with an 'invincible obstinacy!' How reconcile these two inconsistencies? Ay, how?

But to finish-off this Egyptian Masonic business, and bring it all to a focus, we shall now, for the first and for the last time, peep one moment through the spyglass of Monsieur de Luchet, in that *Essai sur les Illuminés* of his. The whole matter being so much of a chimera, how can it be painted otherwise than chimerically? Of the following passage one thing is true, that a creature of the seed of Adam believed it to be true. List, list, then; O list!

'The Recipiendary is led by a darksome path, into an immense hall, the ceiling, the walls, the floor of which are covered by a black cloth,

[3] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, traduite d'après l'original Italien*, ch. ii. iii. (Paris, 1791.)

sprinkled over with red flames and menacing serpents: three sepulchral lamps emit, from time to time, a dying glimmer; and the eye half distinguishes, in this lugubrious den, certain wrecks of mortality suspended by funereal crapes: a heap of skeletons forms in the centre a sort of altar; on both sides of it are piled books; some contain menaces against the perjured; others the deadly narrative of the vengeances which the Invisible Spirit has exacted; of the infernal evocations for a long time pronounced in vain.

'Eight hours elapse. Then Phantoms, trailing mortuary veils, slowly cross the hall, and sink in caverns, without audible noise of trap-doors or of falling. You notice only that they are gone, by a fetid odour exhaled from them.

'The Novice remains four-and-twenty hours in this gloomy abode, in the midst of a freezing silence. A rigorous fast has already weakened his thinking faculties. Liquors, prepared for the purpose, first weary, and at length wear-out his senses. At his feet are placed three cups, filled with a drink of greenish colour. Necessity lifts them towards his lips; involuntary fear repels them.

'At last appear two men; looked upon as the ministers of death. These gird the pale brow of the Recipiendary with an auroral-coloured riband, dipt in blood, and full of silvered characters mixed with the figure of Our Lady of Loretto. He receives a copper crucifix, of two inches length; to his neck are hung a sort of amulets, wrapped in violet cloth. He is stript of his clothes; which two ministering brethren deposit on a funeral pile, erected at the other end of the hall. With blood, on his naked body, are traced crosses. In this state of suffering and humiliation, he sees approaching with large strides five Phantoms, armed with swords, and clad in garments dropping blood. Their faces are veiled: they spread a carpet on the floor; kneel there; pray; and remain with outstretched hands crossed on their breast, and face fixed on the ground, in deep silence. An hour passes in this painful attitude. After which fatiguing trial, plaintive cries are heard; the funeral pile takes fire, yet casts only a pale light; the garments are thrown on it and burnt. A colossal and almost transparent Figure rises from the very bosom of the pile. At sight of it, the five prostrated men fall into convulsions insupportable to look on; the too faithful image of those foaming struggles wherein a mortal, at handgrips with a sudden pain, ends by sinking under it.

'Then a trembling voice pierces the vault, and articulates the formula of those execrable oaths that are to be sworn: my pen falters; I think myself almost guilty to retrace them.'

O Luchet, what a taking! Is there no hope left, thinkest thou? Thy brain is all gone to addled albumen; help seems none, if not in that last mother's-bosom of all the ruined: Brandy-and-water!—An unfeeling world may laugh; but ought

to recollect that, forty years ago, these things were sad realities,—in the heads of many men.

As to the execrable oaths, this seems the main one: 'Honour and respect *Aqua Toffana*, as a sure, prompt and necessary means of purging the Globe, by the death or the hebetation of such as endeavour to debase the Truth, or snatch it from our hands.' And so the catastrophe ends by bathing our poor half-dead Recipiendary first in blood, then, after some genuflexions, in water; and 'serving him a repast composed of roots,'—we grieve to say, mere potatoes-and-point!

Figure now all this boundless cunningly devised Agglomerate of royal-arches, death's-heads, hieroglyphically painted screens, *Columbs* in the state of innocence; with spacious masonic halls, dark, or in the favourablest theatrical light-and-dark; Kircher's magic-lantern, Belshazzar hand-writings, of phosphorus: 'plaintive tones,' gong-beatings; hoary beard of a supernatural Grand Cophta emerging from the gloom;—and how it acts, not only indirectly through the foolish senses of men, but directly on their Imagination; connecting itself with Enoch and Elias, with Philanthropy, Immortality, Eleutheromania, and Adam Weisshaupt's Illuminati, and so downwards to the infinite Deep: figure all this; and in the centre of it, sitting eager and alert, the skilfulest Panourgos, working the mighty chaos, into a creation—of ready-money. In such a wide plastic ocean of sham and foam had the Archquack now happily begun to envelop himself.

Accordingly he goes forth prospering and to prosper. Arrived in any City, he has but by masonic grip to accredit himself with the Venerable of the place; and, not by degrees as formerly, but in a single night, is introduced in Grand Lodge to all that is fattest and foolishest far or near; and in the fittest arena, a gilt-pasteboard Masonic hall. There between the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, can the great Sheepstealer see his whole flock of Dupeables assembled in one penfold; affectionately blatant, licking the hand they are to bleed by. Victorious Acharat-Beppo! The genius of Amazement, moreover, has now shed her glory round him; he is radiant-headed, a supernatural by his very gait. Behold him everywhere welcomed with vivats, or in awestruck silence: gilt-pasteboard Freemasons

receive him under the Steel-Arch of crossed sabres; he mounts to the Seat of the Venerable; holds high discourse hours long, on Masonry, Morality, Universal Science, Divinity, and Things in general, with 'a sublimity, an emphasis and unction,' proceeding, it appears, 'from the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost.' Then there are Egyptian Lodges to be founded, corresponded with,—a thing involving expense; elementary fractions of many a priceless arcanum, nay if the place will stand it, of the Pentagon itself, can be given to the purified in life: how gladly would he *give* them, but they have to be brought from the uttermost ends of the world, and cost money. Now too, with what tenfold impetuosity do all the old trades of Egyptian Drops, Beauty-waters, Secret-favours, expand themselves, and rise in price! Life-weary moneyed Donothing, this seraphic Countess is Grand Priestess of the Egyptian Female Lodges; has a touch of the supramundane Undine in her: among all thy intrigues, hadst thou ever yet Endymion-like an intrigue with the lunar Diana,—called also Hecate? And thou, O antique, much-loving faded Dowager, *this* Squire-of-dames can, it appears probable, command the Seven Angels, Uriel, Anachiel and Company; at lowest, has the eyes of all Europe fixed on him!—The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money.

To us, much meditating on the matter, it seemed perhaps strangest of all, how Count Cagliostro, received under the Steel Arch, could hold Discourses, of from one to three hours long, on Universal Science, of such unction, we do not say as to seem inspired by the Holy Spirit, but as not to get him lugged out of doors directly after his first head of method, and drowned in whole oceans of salt-and-water. The man could not speak; only babble in long-winded diffusions, chaotic circumvolutions tending nowhither. He had no thought for speaking with; he had not even a language. His Sicilian Italian, and Laquais-de-place French, garnished with shreds from all European dialects, was wholly intelligible to no mortal; a Tower-of-Babel jargon, which made many think him a kind of Jew. But indeed, with the language of Greeks, or of Angels, what better were it? The man, once for all, has no articulate utterance; that tongue of his emits noises enough, but no speech. Let him begin the plainest story, his stream stagnates at the

first stage; chafes, "ahem! ahem!" loses itself in the earth; or, bursting over, flies abroad without bank or channel,—into separate plashes. Not a stream, but a lake, a wide-spread indefinite marsh. His whole thought is confused, inextricable; what thought, what resemblance of thought he has, cannot deliver itself, except in gasps, blustering gushes, spasmodic refluences, which make bad worse. Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble: how thou bubblest, foolish 'Bubblyjock'! Hear him once, and on a dead-lift occasion, as the Inquisition Gurney reports it:

'"I mean and I wish to mean, that even as those who honour their father and mother, and respect the sovereign Pontiff, are blessed of God; even so all that I did, I did it by the order of God, with the power which he vouchsafed to me, and to the advantage of God and of Holy Church; and I mean to give the proofs of all that I have done and said, not only physically but morally, by showing that as I have served God for God and by the power of God, he has given me at last the counterpoison to confound and combat Hell; for I know no other enemies than those that are in Hell, and if I am wrong, the Holy Father will punish me; if I am right, he will reward me; and if the Holy Father could get into his hands tonight these answers of mine, I predict to all brethren, believers and unbelievers, that I should be at liberty tomorrow morning." Being desired to give these proofs then, he answered: "To prove that I have been chosen of God as an apostle to defend and propagate religion, I say that as the Holy Church has instituted pastors to demonstrate in face of the world that she is the true Catholic faith, even so, having operated with approbation and by the counsel of pastors of the Holy Church, I am, as I said, fully justified in regard to all my operations; and these pastors have assured me that my Egyptian Order was divine, and deserved to be formed into an Order sanctioned by the Holy Father, as I said in another interrogatory."'

How then, in the name of wonder, said we, could such a babbling, bubbling Turkey-cock speak 'with unction'?

Two things here are to be taken into account. First, the difference between speaking and public speaking; a difference altogether generic. Secondly, the wonderful power of a certain audacity, often named impudence. Was it never thy hard fortune, good Reader, to attend any Meeting convened for Public purposes; any Bible-Society, Reform, Conservative, Thatched-Tavern, Hogg Dinner, or other such Meeting? Thou hast seen some full-fed Long-ear, by free determination or on sweet constraint, start to his legs, and give voice. Well aware wert thou that there was not, had not been, could not be, in that entire

ass-cranium of his any fraction of an idea: nevertheless mark him. If at first an ominous haze flit round, and nothing, not even nonsense, dwell in his recollection,—heed it not; let him but plunge desperately on, the spell is broken. Commonplaces enough are at hand: 'labour of love,' 'rights of suffering millions,' 'throne and altar,' 'divine gift of song,' or what else it may be; the Meeting, by its very *name*, has environed itself in a given element of Commonplace. But anon, behold how his talking-organs get heated, and the friction vanishes; cheers, applauses, with the previous dinner and strong drink, raise him to height of noblest temper. And now, as for your vociferous Dullard, is easiest of all, let him keep on the soft, safe *parallel* course; parallel to the Truth, or nearly so; for Heaven's sake, not in *contact* with it: no obstacle will meet him; on the favouring given element of Commonplace he triumphantly careers.

He is as the ass, whom you took and cast headlong into the water: the water at first threatens to swallow him; but he finds, to his astonishment, that he can *swim* therein, that it is buoyant and bears him along. One sole condition is indispensable: audacity, vulgarly called impudence. Our ass must *commit* himself to his watery 'element;' in free daring, strike-forth his four limbs from him: then shall he not drown and sink, but shoot gloriously forward, and swim, to the admiration of bystanders. The ass, safe landed on the other bank, shakes his rough hide, wonder-struck himself at the faculty that lay in him, and waves joyfully his long ears: so too the public speaker. Cagliostro, as we know him of old, is not without a certain blubbery oiliness of soul as of body, with vehemence lying under it; has the volublest, noisiest tongue; and in the audacity vulgarly called impudence is without a fellow. The Commonplaces of such Steel-Arch Meetings are soon at his finger-ends: that same blubbery oiliness, and vehemence lying under it, once give them an element and stimulus, are the very gift of a fluent public speaker—to Dupeables.

Here too let us mention a circumstance, not insignificant, if true, which it may readily enough be. In younger years, Beppo Balsamo once, it is recorded, took some pains to procure, 'from a country vicar,' under quite false pretences, 'a bit of cotton steeped in holy oils.' What could such bit of cotton

steeped in holy oils do for him? An Unbeliever from any basis of conviction the unbelieving Beppo could never be; but solely from stupidity and bad morals. Might there not lie in that chaotic blubbery nature of his, at the bottom of all, a certain musk-grain of real Superstitious Belief? How wonderfully such a musk-grain of Belief will flavour, and impregnate with seductive odour, a whole inward world of Quackery, so that every fibre thereof shall smell *musk*, is well known. No Quack can persuade like him who has himself some persuasion. Nay, so wondrous is the act of Believing, Deception and Self-deception must, rigorously speaking, coexist in all Quacks; and he perhaps were definable as the best Quack, in whom the smallest musk-grain of the latter would sufficiently flavour the largest mass of the former.

But indeed, as we know otherwise, was there not in Cagliostro a certain pinchbeck counterfeit of all that is golden and good in man, of somewhat even that is best? Cheers, and illuminated hieroglyphs, and the ravishment of thronging audiences, can make him maudlin; his very wickedness of practice will render him louder in eloquence of theory; and 'philanthropy,' 'divine science,' 'depth of unknown worlds,' 'finer feelings of the heart,' and suchlike shall draw tears from most asses of sensibility. Neither, indeed, is it of moment how *few* his elementary Commonplaces are, how empty his head is, so he but agitate it well: thus a lead-drop or two, put into the emptiest dry-bladder, and jingled to and fro, will make noise enough; and even, if skilfully jingled, a kind of martial music.

Such is the Cagliostric palaver, that bewitches all manner of believing souls. If the ancient Father was named Chrysostom, or Mouth-of-Gold, be the modern Quack named Pinchbeckostom, or Mouth-of-Pinchbeck; in an Age of Bronze such metal finds elective affinities. On the whole, too, it is worth considering what element your Quack specially works in: the element of Wonder! The Genuine, be he artist or artisan, works in the finitude of the Known; the Quack in the infinitude of the Unknown. And then how, in rapidest progression, he grows and advances, once start him! Your name is up, says the adage; you may lie in bed. A nimbus of renown and preternatural astonishment envelops Cagliostro; enchants the general eye. The few reasoning mortals scattered here and

there who see through him, deafened in the universal hubbub, shut their lips in sorrowful disdain; confident in the grand remedy, Time. The Enchanter meanwhile rolls on his way; what boundless materials of Deceptibility, what greediness and ignorance, especially what prurient brute-mindedness, exist over Europe in this the most deceivable of modern ages, are stirred up, fermenting in his behoof. He careers onward as a Comet; his nucleus, of paying and praising Dupes, embraces, in long radius, what city and province he rests over; his thinner tail, of wondering and curious Dupes, stretches into remotest lands. Good Lavater, from amid his Swiss Mountains, could say of him: 'Cagliostro, a man; and a man such as few are; in whom, 'however, I am not a believer. O that he were simple of heart 'and humble, like a child; that he had feeling for the simpli-'city of the Gospel, and the majesty of the Lord (*Hoheit des 'Herrn*)! Who were so great as he? Cagliostro often tells 'what is not true, and promises what he does not perform. Yet 'do I nowise hold his operations as deception, though they are 'not what he calls them.'[4] If good Lavater could so say of him, what must others have been saying!

Comet-wise, progressing with loud flourish of kettle-drums, everywhere under the Steel-Arch, evoking spirits, transmuting metals (to such as could stand it), the Archquack has traversed Saxony; at Leipzig has run athwart the hawser of a brother quack (poor Schröpfer, here scarcely recognisable as '*Scieffert*'), and wrecked him. Through Eastern Germany, Prussian Poland, he progresses; and so now at length, in the spring of 1780, has arrived at Petersburg. His pavilion is erected here, his flag prosperously hoisted: Mason-lodges have long ears; he is distributing, as has now become his wont, Spagiric Food, medicine for the poor; a train-oil Prince, Potemkin or something like him, for accounts are dubious, feels his chops water over a seraphic Seraphina: all goes merry, and promises the best. But in those despotic countries, the Police is so arbitrary! Cagliostro's thaumaturgy must be overhauled by the Empress's Physician (Mouncey, a hard Annandale Scot); is found nought, the Spagiric Food unfit for a dog: and so, the whole particulars of his Lordship's conduct being put together, the result is, that he must leave Petersburg, in a given brief

[4] *Lettre du Comte Mirabeau sur Cagliostro et Lavater*, p. 42. (Berl. 1786.)

term of hours. Happy for him that it was so brief: scarcely is he gone, till the Prussian Ambassador appears with a complaint, that he has falsely assumed the Prussian uniform at Rome; the Spanish Ambassador with a still graver complaint, that he has forged bills at Cadiz. However, he is safe over the marches: let them complain their fill.

In Courland, and in Poland, great things await him; yet not unalloyed by two small reverses. The famed Countess von der Recke, a born Fair Saint, what the Germans call *Schöne Seele*, as yet quite young in heart and experience, but broken down with grief for departed friends,—seeks to question the world-famous Spirit-summoner on the secrets of the Invisible Kingdoms; whither, with fond strained eyes, she is incessantly looking. The *galimathias* of Pinchbeckostom cannot impose on this pure-minded simple woman: she recognises the Quack in him, and in a printed Book makes known the same: Mephisto's mortifying experience with Margaret, as above foretold, renews itself for Cagliostro.[5] At Warsaw too, though he discourses on Egyptian Masonry, on Medical Philosophy, and the ignorance of Doctors, and performs successfully with *Pupil* and *Columb*, a certain 'Count M.' cherishes more than doubt; which ends in certainty, in a written *Cagliostro Unmasked*. The Arch-quack, triumphant, sumptuously feasted in the city, has retired with a chosen set of believers, with whom, however, was this unbelieving 'M.,' into the country; to transmute metals, to prepare perhaps the Pentagon itself. All that night, before leaving Warsaw, 'our dear Master' had spent conversing with spirits. Spirits? cries 'M.:' Not he; but melting ducats: he has a melted mass of them in this crucible, which now, by sleight of hand, he would fain substitute for that other, filled, as you all saw, with red-lead, carefully luted down, smelted, set to cool, smuggled from among our hands, and now (look at it, ye asses!)—found broken and hidden among these bushes!

Neither does the Pentagon, or Elixir of Life, or whatever it was, prosper better. 'Our sweet Master enters into expostula-'tion:' 'swears by his great God, and his honour, that he will 'finish the work and make us happy. He carries his modesty 'so far as to propose that he shall work with chains on his 'feet; and consents to lose his life, by the hands of his dis-

[5] *Zeitgenossen*, No. 15. § *Frau von der Recke.*

'ciples, if before the end of the *fourth passage*, his word be 'not made good. He lays his hand on the ground, and kisses 'it; holds it up to Heaven, and again takes God to witness 'that he speaks true; calls on Him to exterminate him if he 'lies.' A vision of the hoary-bearded Grand Cophta himself makes night solemn. In vain! The sherds of that broken red-lead crucible, which pretends to stand here unbroken half-full of silver, lie *there*, before your eyes: that 'resemblance of a sleeping child,' grown visible in the magic cooking of our Elixir, proves to be an inserted rosemary-leaf; the Grand Cophta cannot be gone too soon.

Count 'M.,' balancing towards the opposite extreme, even thinks him inadequate as a Quack:

'Far from being modest,' says this Unmasker, 'he brags beyond expression, in anybody's presence, especially in women's, of the grand faculties he possesses. Every word is an exaggeration, or a statement you feel to be improbable. The smallest contradiction puts him in fury: his vanity breaks through on all sides; he lets you give him a festival that sets the whole city a-talking. Most impostors are supple, and endeavour to gain friends. This one, you might say, studies to appear arrogant, to make all men enemies, by his rude injurious speeches, by the squabbles and grudges he introduces among friends.' 'He quarrels with his coadjutors for trifles; fancies that a simple giving of the lie will persuade the public that they are liars.' 'Schröpfer at Leipzig was far cleverer.' 'He should get some ventriloquist for assistant: should read some Books of Chemistry; study the Tricks of Philadelphia and Comus.'[6]

Fair advices, good 'M.;' but do not you yourself admit that he has a 'natural genius for deception;' above all things 'a forehead of brass (*front d'airain*), which nothing can dis-'concert'? To such a genius, and such a brow, Comus and Philadelphia, and all the ventriloquists in Nature, can add little. Give the Archquack his due. These arrogancies of his prove only that he is mounted on his high horse, and has now the world under him.

Such reverses, which will occur in the lot of every man, are, for our Cagliostro, but as specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. With undimmed lustre he is, as heretofore, handed-over from this 'Prince P.' to that Prince Q.; among which high believing potentates, what is an incredulous 'Count M.'? His

[6] *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780, pp. 35 et seq. (Paris, 1786.)

pockets are distended with ducats and diamonds: he is off to Vienna, to Frankfort, to Strasburg, by extra post; and there also will work miracles. 'The train he commonly took with 'him,' says the Inquisition-Biographer, 'corresponded to the 'rest; he always travelled post, with a considerable suite: 'couriers, lackeys, body-servants, domestics of all sorts, sumptuously dressed, gave an air of reality to the high birth he 'vaunted. The very liveries he got made at Paris cost twenty '*louis* each. Apartments furnished in the height of the mode; 'a magnificent table, open to numerous guests; rich dresses 'for himself and his wife, corresponded to this luxurious way 'of life. His feigned generosity likewise made a great noise. 'Often he gratuitously doctored the poor, and even gave them 'alms.'[7]

In the inside of all this splendid travelling and lodging economy are to be seen, as we know, two suspicious-looking rouged or unrouged figures, of a Count and a Countess; lolling on their cushions there, with a jaded, haggard kind of aspect; they eye one another sullenly, in silence, with a scarce-suppressed indignation; for each thinks the other does not work enough and eats too much. Whether Dame Lorenza followed her peculiar side of the business with reluctance or with free alacrity, is a moot-point among Biographers: not so that, with her choleric adipose Archquack, she had a sour life of it, and brawling abounded. If we look still farther inwards, and try to penetrate the inmost self-consciousness, what in another man would be called the conscience, of the Archquack himself, the view gets most uncertain; little or nothing to be seen but a thick fallacious haze. Which indeed *was* the main thing extant there. Much in the Count Front-d'airain remains dubious; yet hardly this: his want of clear insight into anything, most of all into his own inner man. Cunning in the supreme degree he has; intellect next to none. Nay, is not cunning (couple it with an esurient character) the natural consequence of *defective* intellect? It is properly the vehement exercise of a short, poor vision; of an intellect sunk, bemired; which can attain to no free vision, otherwise it would lead the esurient man to be honest.

Meanwhile gleams of muddy light will occasionally visit all

[7] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo*, p. 41.

mortals; every living creature (according to Milton, the very Devil) has some more or less faint resemblance of a Conscience; must make inwardly certain auricular confessions, absolutions, professions of faith,—were it only that he does not yet quite loathe, and so proceed to hang himself. What such a Porcus as Cagliostro might specially feel, and think, and *be*, were difficult in any case to say; much more when contradiction and mystification, designed and unavoidable, so involve the matter. One of the most authentic documents preserved of him is the Picture of his Visage. An Effigies once universally diffused; in oil-paint, aquatint, marble, stucco, and perhaps gingerbread, decorating millions of apartments: of which remarkable Effigies one copy, engraved in the line-manner, happily still lies here. Fittest of visages; worthy to be worn by the Quack of Quacks! A most portentous face of scoundrelism: a fat, snub, abominable face; dew-lapped, flat-nosed, greasy, full of greediness, sensuality, oxlike obstinacy; a forehead impudent, refusing to be ashamed; and then two eyes turned up seraphically languishing, as in divine contemplation and adoration; a touch of quiz too: on the whole, perhaps the most perfect quack-face produced by the eighteenth century. There he sits, and seraphically languishes, with this epigraph:

De l'Ami des Humains reconnaissez les traits:
Tous ses jours sont marqués par de nouveaux bienfaits,
Il prolonge la vie, il secourt l'indigence;
Le plaisir d'être utile est seul sa récompense.

A probable conjecture were, that this same Theosophy, Theophilanthropy, Solacement of the Poor, to which our Archquack now more and more betook himself, might serve not only as bird-lime for external game, but also half-unconsciously as salve for assuaging his own spiritual sores. Am not I a charitable man? could the Archquack say: if I have erred myself, have I not, by theosophic unctuous discourses, removed much cause of error? The lying, the quackery, what are these but the method of accommodating yourself to the temper of men; of getting their ear, their dull long ear, which Honesty had no chance to catch? Nay, at worst, is not this an unjust world; full of nothing but beasts of prey, four-footed or two-footed? Nature has commanded, saying: Man, help thyself. Ought not

the man of my genius, since he was not born a Prince, since in these scandalous times he has not been elected a Prince, to make himself one? If not by open violence, for which he wants military force, then surely by superior science,—exercised in a private way. Heal the diseases of the Poor, the far deeper diseases of the Ignorant; in a word, found Egyptian Lodges, and get the means of founding them.—By such soliloquies can Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, in rare atrabiliar hours of self-questioning, compose himself. For the rest, such hours are rare: the Count is a man of action and digestion, not of self-questioning; usually the day brings its abundant task; there is no time for abstractions,—of the metaphysical sort.

Be this as it may, the Count has arrived at Strasburg; is working higher wonders than ever. At Strasburg, indeed, in the year 1783, occurs his apotheosis; what we can call the culmination and Fourth Act of his Life-drama. He was here for a number of months; in full blossom and radiance, the envy and admiration of the world. In large hired hospitals, he with open drug-box containing 'Extract of Saturn,' and even with open purse, relieves the suffering poor; unfolds himself lamb-like, angelic to a believing few, of the rich classes; turns a silent minatory lion-face to unbelievers, were they of the richest. Medical miracles have in all times been common: but what miracle is this of an Oriental or Occidental Serene-Excellence, who, 'regardless of expense,' employs himself not in preserving game, but in curing sickness, in illuminating ignorance? Behold how he dives, at noonday, into the infectious hovels of the mean; and on the equipages, haughtinesses, and even dinner-invitations of the great, turns only his negatory front-of-brass! The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, first-class peer of France, of the Blood-royal of Brittany, intimates a wish to see him; he answers: "If Monseigneur the Cardinal is sick, let him come, and I will cure him; if he is well, he has no need of me, I none of him."[8]

Heaven meanwhile has sent him a few disciples: by a nice tact, he knows his man; to one speaks only of Spagiric Medicine, Downfall of Tyranny, and the Egyptian Lodge; to another, of quite high matters, beyond this diurnal sphere, of visits from the Angel of Light, visits from him of Darkness;

[8] *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 48.

passing a Statue of Christ, he will pause with a wondrously accented plaintive "Ha!" as of recognition, as of thousand-years remembrance; and when questioned, sink into mysterious silence. *Is* he the Wandering Jew, then? Heaven knows! At Strasburg, in a word, Fortune not only smiles but laughs upon him: as crowning favour, he finds here the richest, inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe ever yet vouchsafed him; no other than that same many-titled Louis de Rohan; strong in whose favour, he can laugh again at Fortune.

Let the curious reader look at him, for an instant or two, through the eyes of two eye-witnesses: the Abbé Georgel, Prince Louis's diplomatic Factotum, and Herr Meiners, the Göttingen Professor:

'Admitted at length,' says our too-prosing Jesuit Abbé, 'to the sanctuary of this Æsculapius, Prince Louis saw, according to his own account, in the incommunicative man's physiognomy, something so dignified, so imposing, that he felt penetrated with a religious awe, and reverence dictated his address. Their interview, which was brief, excited more keenly than ever his desire of farther acquaintance. He attained it at length: and the crafty empiric graduated so cunningly his words and procedure, that he gained, without appearing to court it, the Cardinal's entire confidence, and the greatest ascendency over his will. "Your soul," said he one day to the Prince, "is worthy of mine; you deserve to be made participator of all my secrets." Such an avowal captivated the whole faculties, intellectual and moral, of a man who at all times had hunted after secrets of alchymy and botany. From this moment their union became intimate and public: Cagliostro went and established himself at Saverne, while his Eminency was residing there; their solitary interviews were long and frequent.' * * 'I remember once, having learnt, by a sure way, that Baron de Planta (his Eminency's man of affairs) had frequent, most expensive orgies, in the Archiepiscopal Palace, where Tokay wine ran like water, to regale Cagliostro and his pretended wife, I thought it my duty to inform the Cardinal: his answer was, "I know it; I have even authorised him to commit abuses, if he judge fit."' * * 'He came at last to have no other will than Cagliostro's: and to such a length had it gone, that this sham Egyptian, finding it good to quit Strasburg for a time, and retire into Switzerland, the Cardinal, apprised thereof, despatched his Secretary as well to attend him, as to obtain Predictions from him; such were transmitted in cipher to the Cardinal on every point he needed to consult of.'[9]—

'Before ever I arrived in Strasburg' (hear now the as prosing Protestant Professor), 'I knew almost to a certainty that I should not see

[9] Georgel, *ubi supra*.

Count Cagliostro; at least, not get to speak with him. From many persons I had heard that he, on no account, received visits from curious Travellers, in a state of health; that such as, without being sick, appeared in his audiences were sure to be treated by him, in the brutalest way, as spies.' * * 'Nevertheless, though I saw not this new god of Physic near at hand and deliberately, but only for a moment as he rolled on in a rapid carriage, I fancy myself to be better acquainted with him than many that have lived in his society for months.' 'My unavoidable conviction is, that Count Cagliostro, from of old, has been more of a cheat than an enthusiast; and also that he continues a cheat to this day.

'As to his country I have ascertained nothing. Some make him a Spaniard, others a Jew, or an Italian, or a Ragusan; or even an Arab, who had persuaded some Asiatic Prince to send his son to travel in Europe, and then murdered the youth, and taken possession of his treasures. As the self-styled Count speaks badly all the languages you hear from him, and has most likely spent the greater part of his life under feigned names far from home, it is probable enough no sure trace of his origin may ever be discovered.'

'On his first appearance in Strasburg he connected himself with the Freemasons; but only till he felt strong enough to stand on his own feet: he soon gained the favour of the Prætor and the Cardinal; and through these the favour of the Court, to such a degree that his adversaries cannot so much as think of overthrowing him. With the Prætor and Cardinal he is said to demean himself as with persons who were under boundless obligation to him, to whom he was under none: the equipage of the Cardinal he seems to use as freely as his own. He pretends that he can recognise Atheists or Blasphemers by the smell; that the vapour from such throws him into epileptic fits; into which sacred disorder he, like a true juggler, has the art of falling when he likes. In public he no longer vaunts of rule over spirits, or other magical arts; but I know, even as certainly, that he still pretends to evoke spirits, and by their help and apparition to heal diseases, as I know this other fact, that he understands no more of the human system, or the nature of its diseases, or the use of the commonest therapeutic methods, than any other quack.'

'According to the crediblest accounts of persons who have long observed him, he is a man to an inconceivable degree choleric (*heftig*), heedless, inconstant; and therefore doubtless it was the happiest idea he ever in his whole life came upon, this of making himself inaccessible; of raising the most obstinate reserve as a bulwark round him; without which precaution he must long ago have been caught at fault.

'For his own labour he takes neither payment nor present: when presents are made him of such a sort as cannot without offence be refused, he forthwith returns some counter-present, of equal or still higher value. Nay he not only takes nothing from his patients, but frequently

admits them, months long, to his house and his table, and will not consent to the smallest recompense. With all this disinterestedness (conspicuous enough, as you may suppose), he lives in an expensive way, plays deep, loses almost constantly to ladies; so that, according to the very lowest estimate, he must require at least 20,000 livres a-year. The darkness which Cagliostro has, on purpose, spread over the sources of his income and outlay, contributes even more than his munificence and miraculous cures to the notion that he is a divine extraordinary man, who has watched Nature in her deepest operations, and among other secrets stolen that of Gold-making from her.' * * 'With a mixture of sorrow and indignation over our age, I have to record that this man has found acceptance, not only among the great, who from of old have been the easiest bewitched by such, but also with many of the learned, and even physicians and naturalists.'[10]

Halcyon days; only too good to continue! All glory runs its course; has its culmination, and then its often precipitous decline. Eminency Rohan, with fervid temper and small instruction, perhaps of dissolute, certainly of dishonest manners, in whom the faculty of Wonder had attained such prodigious development, was indeed the very stranded whale for jackals to feed on: unhappily, however, no one jackal could long be left in solitary possession of him. A sharper-toothed she-jackal now strikes-in; bites infinitely deeper; stranded whale and he-jackal both are like to become her prey. A young French Mantua-maker, 'Countess de La Motte-Valois, descended from Henri II. by the bastard line,' without Extract of Saturn, Egyptian Masonry, or any *verbal* conference with Dark Angels,—has genius enough to get her finger in the Archquack's rich Hermetic Projection, appropriate the golden proceeds, and even finally break the crucible. Prince Cardinal Louis de Rohan is off to Paris, under her guidance, to see the long-invisible Queen, or Queen's *Apparition;* to pick up the Rose in the Garden of Trianon, dropt by her fair sham-royal hand; and then—descend rapidly to the Devil, and drag Cagliostro along with him.

The intelligent reader observes, we have now arrived at that stupendous business of the *Diamond Necklace:* into the dark complexities of which we need not here do more than glance: who knows but, next month, our Historical Chapter, written specially on this subject, may itself see the light?

[10] Meiners: *Briefe über die Schweiz* (as quoted in *Mirabeau*).

Enough, for the present, if we fancy vividly the poor whale Cardinal, so deep in the adventure that Grand-Cophtic 'predictions transmitted in cipher' will no longer illuminate him; but the Grand Cophta must leave all masonic or other business, happily begun in Naples, Bourdeaux, Lyons, and come personally to Paris with predictions at first hand. 'The new Calchas,' says poor Abbé Georgel, 'must have read the entrails of his victim 'ill; for, on issuing from these communications with the Angel 'of Light and of Darkness, he prophesied to the Cardinal that 'this happy correspondence,' with the Queen's Similitude, 'would place him at the highest point of favour; that his in-'fluence in the Government would soon become paramount; 'that he would use it for the propagation of good principles, 'the glory of the Supreme Being, and the happiness of French-'men.' The new Calchas was indeed at fault: but how could he be otherwise? Let these high Queen's-favours, and all terrestrial shiftings of the wind, turn as they will, *his* reign, he can well see, is appointed to be temporary; in the mean while, Tokay flows like water; prophecies of good, not of evil, are the method to keep it flowing. Thus if, for Circe de La Motte-Valois, the Egyptian Masonry is but a foolish enchanted cup wherewith to turn her fat Cardinal into a quadruped, she herself converse-wise, for the Grand Cophta, is one who must ever fodder said quadruped with Court hopes, and stall-feed him fatter and fatter,—it is expected, for the knife of *both* parties. They are mutually useful; live in peace, and Tokay festivity, though mutually suspicious, mutually contemptuous. So stand matters through the spring and summer months of the year 1785.

But fancy next that,—while Tokay is flowing within doors, and abroad Egyptian Lodges are getting founded, and gold and glory, from Paris as from other cities, supernaturally coming in,—the latter end of August has arrived, and with it Commissary Chesnon, to lodge the whole unholy Brotherhood, from Cardinal down to Sham-queen, in separate cells of the Bastille! There, for nine long months, let them howl and wail, in bass or in treble; and emit the falsest of false *Mémoires;* among which that *Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro, en présence des autres Co-Accusés*, with its Trebisond Acharats, Scherifs of Mecca, and Nature's unfortunate Child, all gravely printed with

French types in the year 1786, may well bear the palm. Fancy that Necklace or Diamonds will nowhere unearth themselves; that the Tuileries Palace sits struck with astonishment and speechless chagrin; that Paris, that all Europe, is ringing with the wonder. That Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, confronted, at the judgment-bar, with a shrill glib Circe de La Motte, has need of all his eloquence; that nevertheless the Front-of-brass prevails, and exasperated Circe 'throws a candlestick at him.' Finally, that on the 31st of May 1786, the assembled Parliament of Paris, 'at nine in the evening, after a sitting of eighteen hours,' has solemnly pronounced judgment: and now that Cardinal Louis is gone 'to his estates;' Countess de La Motte is shaven on the head, branded, with red-hot iron, 'V' (*Voleuse*) on both shoulders, and confined for life to the Salpêtrière; her Count wandering uncertain, with diamonds for sale, over the British Empire; that the Sieur de Villette, for handling a queen's pen, is banished forever; the too-queenlike Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva (with her unfathered infant) 'put out of Court;'—and Grand Cophta Cagliostro liberated indeed, but pillaged, and ordered forthwith to take himself away. His disciples illuminate their windows; but what does that avail? Commissary Chesnon, Bastille-Governor De Launay cannot recollect the least particular of those priceless effects, those gold-rouleaus, repeating watches of his: he must even retire to Passy that very night; and two days afterwards, sees nothing for it but Boulogne and England. Thus does the miserable pickle-herring tragedy of the Diamond Necklace wind itself up, and wind Cagliostro once more to inhospitable shores.

Arrived here, and lodged tolerably in 'Sloane Street, Knightsbridge,' by the aid of a certain Mr. Swinton, whilom broken Wine-merchant, now Apothecary, to whom he carries introductions, he can drive a small trade in Egyptian pills, such as one 'sells *in Paris* at thirty-shillings the dram;' in unctuously discoursing to Egyptian Lodges; in 'giving public audiences as at Strasburg,'—if so be any one will bite. At all events, he can, by the aid of amanuensis-disciples, compose and publish his *Lettre au Peuple Anglais;* setting forth his unheard-of generosities, unheard-of injustices suffered, in a world not worthy of him, at the hands of English Lawyers, Bastille-Governors, French Counts, and others; his *Lettre aux Français,*

singing to the same tune, predicting too, what many inspired Editors had already boded, that 'the Bastille would be des-'troyed,' and 'a King would come who should govern by 'States-General.' But, alas, the shafts of Criticism are busy with him; so many hostile eyes look towards him: the world, in short, is getting too hot for him. Mark, nevertheless, how the brow of brass quails not; nay a touch of his old poetic Humour, even in this sad crisis, unexpectedly unfolds itself.

One De Morande, Editor of a *Courrier de l'Europe* published here at that period, has for some time made it his distinction to be the foremost of Cagliostro's enemies. Cagliostro, enduring much in silence, happens once, in some 'public audience,' to mention a practice he had witnessed in Arabia the Stony: the people there, it seems, are in the habit of fattening a few pigs annually, on provender mixed with arsenic, whereby the whole pig-carcass by and by becomes, so to speak, arsenical; the arsenical pigs are then let loose into the woods; eaten by lions, leopards and other ferocious creatures; which latter naturally all die in consequence, and so the woods are cleared of them. This adroit practice the Sieur Morande thought a proper subject for banter; and accordingly, in his Seventeenth and two following Numbers, made merry enough with it. Whereupon Count Front-of-brass, whose patience has limits, writes as Advertisement (still to be read in old files of the *Public Advertiser*, under date September 3, 1786), a French Letter, not without causticity and aristocratic disdain; challenging the witty Sieur to breakfast with him, for the 9th of November next, in the face of the world, on an actual Sucking Pig, fattened by Cagliostro, but cooked, carved and selected from by the Sieur Morande,—under bet of Five Thousand Guineas sterling that, next morning thereafter, he the Sieur Morande shall be dead, and Count Cagliostro be alive! The poor Sieur durst not cry, Done; and backed-out of the transaction, making wry faces. Thus does a kind of red coppery splendour encircle our Arch-quack's decline; thus with brow of brass, grim smiling, does he meet his destiny.

But suppose we should now, from these foreign scenes turn homewards, for a moment, into the native alley in Palermo! Palermo, with its dinginess, its mud or dust, the old black Balsamo House, the very beds and chairs, all are still standing

there; and Beppo has altered so strangely, has wandered so far away. Let us look; for happily we have the fairest opportunity.

In April 1787, Palermo contained a Traveller of a thousand; no other than the great Goethe from Weimar. At his Table-d'hôte he heard much of Cagliostro; at length also of a certain Palermo Lawyer, who had been engaged by the French Government to draw up an authentic genealogy and memoir of him. This Lawyer, and even the rude draft of his Memoir, he with little difficulty gets to see; inquires next whether it were not possible to see the actual Balsamo Family, whereof it appears the mother and a widowed sister still survive. For this matter, however, the Lawyer can do nothing; only refer him to his Clerk; who again starts difficulties: To get at those genealogic Documents he has been obliged to invent some story of a Government-Pension being in the wind for those poor Balsamos; and now that the whole matter is finished, and the Paper sent off to France, has nothing so much at heart as to keep out of their way:

'So said the Clerk. However, as I could not abandon my purpose, we after some study concerted that I should give myself out for an Englishman, and bring the family news of Cagliostro, who had lately got out of the Bastille, and gone to London.

'At the appointed hour, it might be three in the afternoon, we set forth. The house lay in the corner of an Alley, not far from the main-street named *Il Casaro*. We ascended a miserable staircase, and came straight into the kitchen. A woman of middle stature, broad and stout, yet not corpulent, stood busy washing the kitchen-dishes. She was decently dressed; and, on our entrance, turned-up the one end of her apron, to hide the soiled side from us. She joyfully recognised my conductor, and said: "Signor Giovanni, do you bring us good news? Have you made out anything?"

'He answered: "In our affair, nothing yet; but here is a Stranger that brings a salutation from your Brother, and can tell you how he is at present."

'The salutation I was to bring stood not in our agreement: meanwhile, one way or other, the introduction was accomplished. "You know my Brother?" inquired she.—"All Europe knows him," answered I; "and I fancied it would gratify you to hear that he is now in safety and well; as, of late, no doubt you have been anxious about him."—"Step in," said she; "I will follow you directly;" and with the Clerk I entered the room.

'It was large and high; and might, with us, have passed for a saloon; it seemed, indeed, to be almost the sole lodging of the family. A single window lighted the large walls, which had once had colour; and on which were black pictures of saints, in gilt frames, hanging round. Two large beds, without curtains, stood at one wall; a brown press, in the form of a writing-desk, at the other. Old rush-bottomed chairs, the backs of which had once been gilt, stood by; and the tiles of the floor were in many places worn deep into hollows. For the rest, all was cleanly; and we approached the family, which sat assembled at the one window, in the other end of the apartment.

'Whilst my guide was explaining, to the old Widow Balsamo, the purpose of our visit, and by reason of her deafness had to repeat his words several times aloud, I had time to observe the chamber and the other persons in it. A girl of about sixteen, well formed, whose features had become uncertain by small-pox, stood at the window; beside her a young man, whose disagreeable look, deformed by the same disease, also struck me. In an easy-chair, right before the window, sat or rather lay a sick, much disshapen person, who appeared to labour under a sort of lethargy.

'My guide having made himself understood, we were invited to take seats. The old woman put some questions to me; which, however, I had to get interpreted before I could answer them, the Sicilian dialect not being quite at my command.

'Meanwhile I looked at the aged widow with satisfaction. She was of middle stature, but well shaped; over her regular features, which age had not deformed, lay that sort of peace usual with people that have lost their hearing; the tone of her voice was soft and agreeable.

'I answered her questions; and my answers also had again to be interpreted for her.

'The slowness of our conversation gave me leisure to measure my words. I told her that her son had been acquitted in France, and was at present in England, where he met with good reception. Her joy, which she testified at these tidings, was mixed with expressions of a heartfelt piety; and as she now spoke a little louder and slower, I could the better understand her.

'In the mean time the daughter had entered; and taken her seat beside my conductor, who repeated to her faithfully what I had been narrating. She had put-on a clean apron; had set her hair in order under the net-cap. The more I looked at her, and compared her with her mother, the more striking became the difference of the two figures. A vivacious, healthy Sensualism (*Sinnlichkeit*) beamed forth from the whole structure of the daughter: she might be a woman of about forty. With brisk blue eyes, she looked sharply round; yet in her look I could trace no suspicion. When she sat, her figure promised more height than it showed when she rose: her posture was determinate,

she sat with her body leaned forwards, the hands resting on the knees. For the rest, her physiognomy, more of the snubby than the sharp sort, reminded me of her Brother's Portrait, familiar to us in engravings. She asked me several things about my journey, my purpose to see Sicily; and was sure I would come back, and celebrate the Feast of Saint Rosalia with them.

'As the grandmother, meanwhile, had again put some questions to me, and I was busy answering her, the daughter kept speaking to my companion half-aloud, yet so that I could take occasion to ask what it was. He answered: Signora Capitummino was telling him that her Brother owed her fourteen gold Ounces; on his sudden departure from Palermo, she had redeemed several things for him that were in pawn; but never since that day had either heard from him, or got money or any other help, though it was said he had great riches, and made a princely outlay. Now would not I perhaps undertake on my return, to remind him, in a handsome way, of the debt, and procure some assistance for her; nay would I not carry a Letter with me, or at all events get it carried? I offered to do so. She asked where I lodged, whither she must send the Letter to me? I avoided naming my abode, and offered to call next day towards night, and receive the Letter myself.

'She thereupon described to me her untoward situation: how she was a widow with three children, of whom the one girl was getting educated in a convent, the other was here present, and her son just gone out to his lesson. How, beside these three children, she had her mother to maintain; and moreover out of Christian love had taken the unhappy sick person there to her house, whereby the burden was heavier: how all her industry would scarcely suffice to get necessaries for herself and hers. She knew indeed that God did not leave good works unrewarded; yet must sigh very sore under the load she had long borne.

'The young people mixed in the dialogue, and our conversation grew livelier. While speaking with the others, I could hear the good old widow ask her daughter: If I belonged, then, to their holy Religion? I remarked also that the daughter strove, in a prudent way, to avoid an answer; signifying to her mother, so far as I could take it up: That the Stranger seemed to have a kind feeling towards them; and that it was not well-bred to question any one straightway on that point.

'As they heard that I was soon to leave Palermo, they became more pressing, and importuned me to come back; especially vaunting the paradisaic days of the Rosalia Festival, the like of which was not to be seen and tasted in all the world.

'My attendant, who had long been anxious to get off, at last put an end to the interview by his gestures; and I promised to return on the morrow evening, and take the Letter. My attendant expressed his joy that all had gone off so well, and we parted mutually content.

'You may fancy the impression this poor and pious, well-disposi-

tioned family had made on me. My curiosity was satisfied; but their natural and worthy bearing had raised an interest in me, which reflection did but increase.

'Forthwith, however, there arose for me anxieties about the following day. It was natural that this appearance of mine, which, at the first moment, had taken them by surprise, should, after my departure, awaken many reflections. By the Genealogy I knew that several others of the family were in life: it was natural that they should call their friends together, and in the presence of all, get those things repeated which, the day before, they had heard from me with admiration. My object was attained; there remained nothing more than, in some good fashion, to end the adventure. I accordingly repaired next day, directly after dinner, alone to their house. They expressed surprise as I entered. The Letter was not ready yet, they said; and some of their relations wished to make my acquaintance, who towards night would be there.

'I answered, that having to set off tomorrow morning, and visits still to pay, and packing to transact, I had thought it better to come early than not at all.

'Meanwhile the son entered, whom yesterday I had not seen. He resembled his sister in size and figure. He brought the Letter they were to give me; he had, as is common in those parts, got it written out of doors, by one of their Notaries that sit publicly to do such things. The young man had a still, melancholy and modest aspect; inquired after his Uncle, asked about his riches and outlays, and added sorrowfully, Why had he so forgotten his kindred? "It were our greatest fortune," continued he, "should he once return hither, and take notice of us: but," continued he, "how came he to let you know that he had relatives in Palermo? It is said, he everywhere denies us, and gives himself out for a man of great birth." I answered this question, which had now arisen by the imprudence of my Guide at our first entrance, in such sort as to make it seem that the Uncle, though he might have reason for concealing his birth from the public, did yet, towards his friends and acquaintance, keep it no secret.

'The sister, who had come up during this dialogue, and by the presence of her brother, perhaps also by the absence of her yesterday's friend, had got more courage, began also to speak with much grace and liveliness. They begged me earnestly to recommend them to their Uncle, if I wrote to him; and not less earnestly, when once I should have made this journey through the Island, to come back and pass the Rosalia Festival with them.

'The mother spoke in accordance with her children. "Sir," said she, "though it is not seemly, as I have a grown daughter, to see stranger gentlemen in my house, and one has cause to guard against both danger and evil-speaking, yet shall you ever be welcome to us, when you return to this city."

'"O yes," answered the young ones, "we will lead the Gentleman all round the Festival; we will show him everything, get a place on the scaffolds, where the grand sights are seen best. What will he say to the great Chariot, and more than all, to the glorious Illumination!"

'Meanwhile the Grandmother had read the Letter and again read it. Hearing that I was about to take leave, she arose, and gave me the folded sheet. "Tell my son," began she with a noble vivacity, nay with a sort of inspiration, "Tell my son how happy the news have made me, which you brought from him! Tell him that I clasp him to my heart"—here she stretched out her arms asunder, and pressed them again together on her breast—"that I daily beseech God and our Holy Virgin for him in prayer; that I give him and his wife my blessing; and that I wish before my end to see him again with these eyes, which have shed so many tears for him."

'The peculiar grace of the Italian tongue favoured the choice and noble arrangement of these words, which moreover were accompanied with lively gestures, wherewith that nation can add such a charm to spoken words.

'I took my leave, not without emotion. They all gave me their hands; the children showed me out; and as I went down stairs, they jumped to the balcony of the kitchen-window, which projected over the street; called after me, threw me salutes, and repeated, that I must in no wise forget to come back. I saw them still on the balcony, when I turned the corner.'[11]

Poor old Felicità, and must thy pious prayers, thy motherly blessings, and so many tears shed by those old eyes, be all in vain! To thyself, in any case, they were blessed.—As for the Signora Capitummino, with her three fatherless children, shall we not hope at least, that the fourteen gold Ounces were paid, by a sure hand, and so her heavy burden, for some space, lightened a little? Alas, no, it would seem; owing to accidents, not even that![12]

Count Cagliostro, all this while, is rapidly proceeding with his Fifth Act; the red coppery splendour darkens more and more into final gloom. Some boiling muddleheads of a dupeable sort there still are in England: Popish-Riot Lord George, for instance, will walk with him to Count Barthélemy's or D'Adhémar's; and, in bad French and worse rhetoric, abuse the Queen of France: but what does it profit? Lord George must one day (after noise enough) revisit Newgate for it; and in the mean while, hard words pay no scores. Apothecary Swinton begins to get wearisome; French spies look ominously

[11] Goethe's *Werke* (*Italiänische Reise*), xxviii. 146. [12] Ibid.

in; Egyptian Pills are slack of sale; the old vulturous Attorney-host anew scents carrion, is bestirring itself anew: Count Cagliostro, in the May of 1787, must once more leave England. But whither? Ah, whither! At Bâle, at Bienne, over Switzerland, the game is up. At Aix in Savoy, there are baths, but no gudgeons in them: at Turin, his Majesty of Sardinia meets you with an order to begone on the instant. A like fate from the Emperor Joseph at Roveredo;—before the *Liber memorialis de Caleostro dum esset Roboretti* could extend to many pages! Count Front-of-brass begins confessing himself to priests: yet 'at Trent paints a new hieroglyphic Screen,'—touching last flicker of a light that once burnt so high! He pawns diamond buckles; wanders necessitous hither and thither; repents, unrepents; knows not what to do. For Destiny has her nets round him; they are straitening, straitening; too soon he will be *ginned!*

Driven out from Trent, what shall he make of the new hieroglyphic Screen, what of himself? The wayworn Grand-Cophtess has begun to blab family secrets; she longs to be in Rome, by her mother's hearth, by her mother's grave; in any nook, where so much as the shadow of refuge waits her. To the desperate Count Front-of-brass all places are nearly alike: urged by female babble, he will go to Rome, then; why not? On a May-day, of the year 1789 (when such glorious work had just begun in France, to him all forbidden!), he enters the Eternal City; it was his doom-summons that called him thither. On the 29th of next December, the Holy Inquisition, long watchful enough, detects him founding some feeble moneyless ghost of an Egyptian Lodge; 'picks him off,' as the military say, and locks him hard and fast in the Castle of St. Angelo:

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate!

Count Cagliostro did not lose all hope: nevertheless a few words will now suffice for him. In vain, with his mouth of pinchbeck and his front of brass, does he heap chimera on chimera; demand religious Books (which are freely given him); demand clean Linen, and an interview with his Wife (which are refused him); assert now that the Egyptian Masonry is a divine system, accommodated to erring and gullible men, which the Holy Father, when he knows it, will patronise; anon that there are

some four millions of Freemasons, spread over Europe, all sworn to exterminate Priest and King, wherever met with: in vain! they will not acquit him, as misunderstood Theophilanthropist; will not emit him, in Pope's pay, as renegade Masonic Spy: 'he can't get out.' Donna Lorenza languishes, invisible to him, in a neighbouring cell; begins at length to *confess!* Whereupon he too, in torrents, will emit confessions and forestall her: these the Inquisition pocket and sift (whence this *Life of Balsamo*); but will not let him out. In fine, after some eighteen months of the weariest hounding, doubling, worrying, and standing at bay, His Holiness gives sentence: The Manuscript of Egyptian Masonry is to be burnt by hand of the common Hangman, and all that intermeddle with such Masonry are accursed; Giuseppe Balsamo, justly forfeited of life for being a Freemason, shall nevertheless in mercy be forgiven; instructed in the duties of penitence, and even kept safe thenceforth and till death,—in ward of Holy Church. Ill-starred Acharat, must it so end with thee? This was in April 1791.

He addressed (how vainly!) an appeal to the French Constituent Assembly. As was said, in Heaven, in Earth, or in Hell there was no Assembly that could well take his part. For four years more, spent one knows not how,—most probably in the furor of edacity, with insufficient cookery, and the stupor of indigestion,—the curtain lazily falls. There rotted and gave way the cordage of a tough heart. One summer morning of the year 1795, the Body of Cagliostro is still found in the prison of St. Leo; but Cagliostro's Self has escaped,—*whither* no man yet knows. The brow of brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; these pinchbeck lips can lie no more: Cagliostro's work is ended, and now only his *account* to present. As the Scherif of Mecca said, "Nature's unfortunate child, adieu!"

Such, according to our comprehension thereof, is the rise, progress, grandeur and decadence of the Quack of Quacks. Does the reader ask, What good was in it; Why occupy his time and ours with the biography of such a miscreant? We answer, It was stated on the very threshold of this matter, in the loftiest terms, by Herr Sauerteig, that the Lives of all Eminent Persons, miscreant or creant, ought to be written. Thus

has not the very Devil his *Life*, deservedly written not by Daniel Defoe only, but by quite other hands than Daniel's? For the rest, the Thing represented on these pages is no Sham, but a Reality; thou hast it, O reader, as we have it: Nature was pleased to produce even such a man, even so, not otherwise; and the Editor of this Magazine is here mainly to record, in an adequate manner, what *she*, of her thousandfold mysterious richness and greatness, produces.

But the moral lesson? Where is the moral lesson? Foolish reader, in every Reality, nay in every genuine Shadow of a Reality (what we call Poem), there lie a hundred such, or a million such, according as thou hast the *eye* to read them! Of which hundred or million lying *here* in the present Reality, couldst not thou, for example, be advised to take this one, to thee worth all the rest: "Behold, I too have attained that "immeasurable, mysterious glory of being *alive;* to me also "a Capability has been intrusted; shall I strive to work it "out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, quacklike, "into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? Or why not "rather, gigman-like, and following the 'respectable' countless "multitude,—into *both?*" The decision is of quite *infinite* moment; see thou make it aright.

But in fine, look at this matter of Cagliostro, as at all matters, with thy heart, with thy whole mind; no longer merely squint at it with the poor side-glance of thy calculative faculty. Look at it not *logically* only, but *mystically*. Thou shalt in sober truth see it (as Sauerteig asserted) to be a Pasquillant verse, of most inspired writing in its kind, in that same 'Grand Bible of Universal History;' wondrously and even indispensably connected with the Heroic portions that stand there; even as the all-showing Light is with the Darkness wherein nothing can be seen; as the hideous taloned *roots* are with the fair *boughs*, and their leaves and flowers and fruit; both of which, and not one of which, make the Tree. Think also whether thou hast known no Public Quacks, on far higher scale than this, whom a Castle of St. Angelo never could get hold of; and how, as Emperors, Chancellors (having found much fitter machinery), they could run their Quack-career; and make whole kingdoms, whole continents, into one huge Egyptian Lodge, and squeeze supplies of money or of blood from it at discretion?

Also, whether thou even now knowest not Private Quacks, innumerable as the sea-sands, toiling as mere *Half*-Cagliostros; imperfect, hybrid-quacks, of whom Cagliostro is as the unattainable ideal and type-specimen? Such is the world. Understand it, despise it, love it; cheerfully hold on thy way through it, with thy eye on higher load-stars!

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.[1]

[1835.]

EDWARD IRVING'S warfare has closed; if not in victory, yet in invincibility, and faithful endurance to the end. The Spirit of the Time, which could not enlist him as its soldier, must needs, in all ways, fight against him as its enemy: it has done its part, and he has done his. One of the noblest natures; a man of antique heroic nature, in questionable modern garniture, which he could not wear! Around him a distracted society, vacant, prurient; heat and darkness, and what these two may breed: mad extremes of flattery, followed by madder contumely, by indifference and neglect! These were the conflicting elements; this is the result they have made out among them. The voice of our 'son of thunder,'—with its deep tone of wisdom that belonged to all articulate-speaking ages, never inaudible amid wildest dissonances that belong to this inarticulate age, which slumbers and somnambulates, which cannot *speak*, but only screech and gibber,—has gone silent so soon. Closed are those lips. The large heart, with its large bounty, where wretchedness found solacement, and they that were wandering in darkness the light as of a home, has paused. The strong man can no more: beaten-on from without, undermined from within, he has had to sink overwearied, as at nightfall, when it was yet but the mid-season of day. Irving was forty-two years and some months old: Scotland sent him forth a Herculean man; our mad Babylon wore him and wasted him, with all her engines; and it took her twelve years. He sleeps with his fathers, in that loved birth-land: Babylon with its deafening inanity rages on; but to him henceforth innocuous, unheeded—forever.

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 61.

Reader, thou hast seen and heard the man, as who has not,—with wise or unwise wonder; thou shalt not see or hear him again. The work, be what it might, is *done;* dark curtains sink over it, enclose it ever deeper into the unchangeable Past. Think, for perhaps thou art one of a thousand, and worthy so to think, That here once more was a genuine man sent into this our *un*genuine phantasmagory of a world, which would go to ruin without such; that here once more, under thy own eyes, in this last decade, was enacted the old Tragedy, and has had its fifth-act now, of *The Messenger of Truth in the Age of Shams,*—and what relation thou thyself mayest have to that. Whether any? Beyond question, thou thyself art *here;* either a dreamer or awake; and one day shalt cease to dream.

This man was appointed a Christian Priest; and strove with the whole force that was in him to *be* it. To be it: in a time of Tithe Controversy, Encyclopedism, Catholic Rent, Philanthropism, and the Revolution of Three Days! He might have been so many things; not a speaker only, but a doer; the leader of hosts of men. For his head, when the Fog-Babylon had not yet obscured it, was of strong far-searching insight; his very enthusiasm was sanguine, not atrabiliar; he was so loving, full of hope, so simple-hearted, and made all that approached him his. A giant force of activity was in the man; speculation was accident, not nature. Chivalry, adventurous field-life of the old Border, and a far nobler sort than that, ran in his blood. There was in him a courage, dauntless not pugnacious, hardly fierce, by no possibility ferocious; as of the generous war-horse, gentle in its strength, yet that laughs at the shaking of the spear.—But, above all, be what he might, to be a *reality* was indispensable for him. In his simple Scottish circle, the highest form of manhood attainable or known was that of Christian; the highest Christian was the Teacher of such. Irving's lot was cast. For the foray-spears were all rusted into earth there; Annan Castle had become a Town-hall; and Prophetic Knox had sent tidings thither: Prophetic Knox; and, alas, also Sceptic Hume; and, as the natural consequence, Diplomatic Dundas! In such mixed incongruous element had the young soul to grow.

Grow, nevertheless, he did, with that strong vitality of his; grow and ripen. What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated and distorted one can never know. Bodily and spiritually, perhaps there was not, in that November 1822, when he first arrived here, a man more full of genial energetic life in all these Islands.

By a fatal chance, Fashion cast her eye on him, as on some impersonation of Novel-Cameronianism, some wild Product of Nature from the wild mountains; Fashion crowded round him, with her meteor lights and Bacchic dances; breathed her foul incense on him; intoxicating, poisoning. One may say, it was his own nobleness that forwarded such ruin; the excess of his sociability and sympathy, of his value for the suffrages and sympathies of men. Siren songs, as of a new Moral Reformation (sons of Mammon, and high sons of Belial and Beelzebub, to become sons of God, and the gumflowers of Almack's to be made living roses in a new Eden), sound in the inexperienced ear and heart. Most seductive, most delusive! Fashion went her idle way, to gaze on Egyptian Crocodiles, Iroquois Hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man,—who unhappily could not in his turn forget. The intoxicating poison had been swallowed; no force of natural health could cast it out. Unconsciously, for most part in deep unconsciousness, there was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed Singularity. O foulest Circean draught, thou poison of Popular Applause! madness is in thee, and death; thy end is Bedlam and the Grave. For the last seven years, Irving, forsaken by the world, strove either to recall it, or to forsake it; shut himself up in a lesser world of ideas and persons, and lived isolated there. Neither in this was there health: for this man such isolation was not fit, such ideas, such persons.

One light still shone on him; alas, through a medium more and more turbid: the light from Heaven. His Bible was there, wherein must lie healing for all sorrows. To the Bible he more and more exclusively addressed himself. If it is the written Word of God, shall it not be the acted Word too? Is it mere sound, then; black printer's-ink on white rag-paper? A half-man could have passed on without answering; a whole

man must answer. Hence Prophecies of Millenniums, Gifts of Tongues,—whereat Orthodoxy prims herself into decent wonder, and waves her, Avaunt! Irving clave to his Belief, as to his soul's soul; followed it whithersoever, through earth or air, it might lead him; toiling as never man toiled to spread it, to gain the world's ear for it,—in vain. Ever wilder waxed the confusion without and within. The misguided noble-minded had now nothing left to do but die. He died the death of the true and brave. His last words, they say, were: "In life and in death I am the Lord's."—Amen! Amen!

One who knew him well, and may with good cause love him, has said: "But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with: I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever, after trial enough, found in this world, or now hope to find.

"The first time I saw Irving was six-and-twenty years ago, in his native town, Annan. He was fresh from Edinburgh, with College prizes, high character and promise; he had come to see our Schoolmaster, who had also been his. We heard of famed Professors, of high matters classical, mathematical, a whole Wonderland of Knowledge: nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end, looked out from the blooming young man. The last time I saw him was three months ago, in London. Friendliness still beamed in his eyes, but now from amid unquiet fire; his face was flaccid, wasted, unsound; hoary as with extreme age: he was trembling over the brink of the grave.—Adieu, thou first Friend; adieu, while this confused Twilight of Existence lasts! Might we meet where Twilight has become Day!"

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.[1]

[1837.]

CHAPTER I.

AGE OF ROMANCE.

THE Age of Romance has not ceased; it never ceases; it does not, if we will think of it, so much as very sensibly decline. "The passions are repressed by social forms; great passions no longer show themselves?" Why, there are passions still great enough to replenish Bedlam, for it never wants tenants; to suspend men from bedposts, from improved-drops at the west end of Newgate. A passion that explosively shivers asunder the Life it took rise in, ought to be regarded as considerable: more no passion, in the highest heyday of Romance, yet did. The passions, by grace of the Supernal and also of the Infernal Powers (for both have a hand in it), can never fail us.

And then, as to 'social forms,' be it granted that they are of the most buckram quality, and bind men up into the pitifulest straitlaced commonplace existence,—you ask, Where is the Romance? In the Scotch way one answers, Where is it not? That very spectacle of an Immortal Nature, with faculties and destiny extending through Eternity, hampered and bandaged up, by nurses, pedagogues, posturemasters, and the tongues of innumerable old women (named 'force of public opinion'); by prejudice, custom, want of knowledge, want of money, want of strength, into, say, the meagre Pattern-Figure that, in these days, meets you in all thoroughfares: a 'god-created Man,' all but abnegating the character of Man; forced to exist, automatised, mummy-wise (scarcely in rare moments audible or visible from amid his wrappages and cerements), as Gentleman or

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, Nos. 85 and 86.

Gigman ;[2] and so selling his birthright of Eternity for the three daily meals, poor at best, which Time yields :—is not this spectacle itself highly romantic, tragical, if we had eyes to look at it? The high-born (highest-born, for he came out of Heaven) lies drowning in the despicablest puddles ; the priceless gift of Life, which he can have but *once*, for he waited a whole Eternity to be born, and now has a whole Eternity waiting to see what he will do when born,—*this* priceless gift we see strangled slowly out of him by innumerable packthreads ; and there remains of the glorious Possibility, which we fondly named Man, nothing but an inanimate mass of foul loss and disappointment, which we wrap in shrouds and bury underground,—surely with well-merited tears. To the Thinker here lies Tragedy enough ; the epitome and marrow of all Tragedy whatsoever.

But so few are Thinkers? Ay, Reader, so few think ; there is the rub ! Not one in the thousand has the smallest turn for thinking ; only for passive dreaming and hearsaying, and active babbling by rote. Of the eyes that men do glare withal so few can *see*. Thus is the world become such a fearful confused Treadmill ; and each man's task has got entangled in his neighbour's, and pulls it awry ; and the Spirit of Blindness, Falsehood and Distraction, justly named the Devil, continually maintains himself among us ; and even hopes (were it not for the Opposition, which by God's grace will also maintain itself) to become supreme. Thus too, among other things, has the Romance of Life gone wholly out of sight : and all History, degenerating into empty invoice-lists of Pitched Battles and Changes of Ministry ; or, still worse, into 'Constitutional History,' or 'Philosophy of History,' or 'Philosophy teaching by Experience,' is become dead, as the Almanacs of other years, —to which species of composition, indeed, it bears, in several points of view, no inconsiderable affinity.

'Of all blinds that shut-up men's vision,' says one, 'the worst is Self.' How true ! How doubly true, if Self, assuming her cunningest, yet miserablest disguise, come on us, in never-ceasing, all-obscuring reflexes from the innumerable Selves of others ; not as Pride, not even as real Hunger, but only as Vanity, and the shadow of an imaginary Hunger for Applause ;

[2] 'I always considered him a respectable man.—What do you mean by respectable? He kept a Gig.'—*Thurtell's Trial.*

under the name of what we call 'Respectability'! Alas now for our Historian: to his other spiritual deadness (which however, so long as he physically breathes, cannot be considered *complete*) this sad new magic influence is added! Henceforth his Histories must all be screwed-up into the 'dignity of History.' Instead of looking fixedly at the *Thing*, and first of all, and beyond all, endeavouring to *see* it, and fashion a living Picture of it, not a wretched politico-metaphysical Abstraction of it, he has now quite other matters to look to. The Thing lies shrouded, invisible, in thousand-fold hallucinations, and foreign air-images: What did the Whigs say of it? What did the Tories? The Priests? The Freethinkers? Above all, What will my own listening circle say of *me* for what I say of it? And then his Respectability in general, as a literary gentleman; his not despicable talent for philosophy! Thus is our poor Historian's faculty directed mainly on two objects: the Writing and the Writer, both of which are quite extraneous; and the Thing written-of fares as we see. Can it be wonderful that Histories, wherein open lying is not permitted, are unromantic? Nay, our very Biographies, how stiff-starched, foisonless, hollow! They stand there respectable; and—what more? Dumb idols; with a skin of delusively-painted waxwork; inwardly empty, or full of rags and bran. In our England especially, which in these days is become the chosen land of Respectability, Life-writing has dwindled to the sorrowfulest condition; it requires a man to be some disrespectable, ridiculous Boswell before he can write a tolerable Life. Thus too, strangely enough, the only Lives worth reading are those of Players, emptiest and poorest of the sons of Adam; who nevertheless were sons of his, and brothers of ours; and by the nature of the case had already bidden Respectability good-day. Such bounties, in this as in infinitely deeper matters, does Respectability shower down on us. Sad are thy doings, O *Gig*; sadder than those of Juggernaut's Car: that, with huge wheel, suddenly crushes asunder the bodies of men; thou, in thy light-bobbing Long-acre springs, gradually winnowest away their souls!

Depend upon it, for one thing, good Reader, no age ever seemed the Age of Romance to *itself*. Charlemagne, let the Poets talk as they will, had his own provocations in the world: what with selling of his poultry and pot-herbs, what with wan-

ton daughters carrying secretaries through the snow; and, for instance, that hanging of the Saxons over the Weser-bridge (four thousand of them, they say, at one bout), it seems to me that the Great Charles had his temper ruffled at times. Roland of Roncesvalles too, we see well in thinking of it, found rainy weather as well as sunny; knew what it was to have hose need darning; got tough beef to chew, or even went dinnerless; was saddle-sick, calumniated, constipated (as his madness too clearly indicates); and oftenest felt, I doubt not, that this was a very Devil's world, and he, Roland himself, one of the sorriest caitiffs there. Only in long subsequent days, when the tough beef, the constipation and the calumny had clean vanished, did it all begin to seem Romantic, and your Turpins and Ariostos found music in it. So, I say, is it *ever!* And the more, as your true hero, your true Roland, is ever *unconscious* that he is a hero: this is a condition of all greatness.

In our own poor Nineteenth Century the Writer of these lines has been fortunate enough to see not a few glimpses of Romance; he imagines this Nineteenth is hardly a whit less romantic than that Ninth, or any other, since centuries began. Apart from Napoleon, and the Dantons, and Mirabeaus, whose fire-words of public speaking, and fire-whirlwinds of cannon and musketry, which for a season darkened the air, are perhaps at bottom but superficial phenomena, he has witnessed, in remotest places, much that could be called romantic, even miraculous. He has witnessed overhead the infinite Deep, with greater and lesser lights, bright-rolling, silent-beaming, hurled forth by the Hand of God: around him and under his feet, the wonderfulest Earth, with her winter snow-storms and her summer spice-airs; and, unaccountablest of all, *himself* standing there. He stood in the lapse of Time; he saw Eternity behind him, and before him. The all-encircling mysterious tide of FORCE, thousandfold (for from force of Thought to force of Gravitation what an interval!) billowed shoreless on; bore him too along with it,—he too was part of it. From its bosom rose and vanished, in perpetual change, the lordliest Real-Phantasmagory, which men name *Being;* and ever anew rose and vanished; and ever that lordliest many-coloured scene was full, another yet the same. Oak-trees fell, young acorns sprang: Men too, new-sent from the Unknown, he met, of tiniest size,

who waxed into stature, into strength of sinew, passionate fire and light: in other men the light was growing dim, the sinews all feeble; they sank, motionless, into ashes, into invisibility; returned *back* to the Unknown, beckoning him their mute farewell. He wanders still by the parting-spot; cannot hear *them;* they are far, how far!—

It was a sight for angels, and archangels; for, indeed, God himself had made it wholly. One many-glancing asbestos-thread in the Web of Universal-History, spirit-woven, it rustled there, as with the howl of mighty winds, through that 'wild-roaring Loom of Time.' Generation after generation, hundreds of them or thousands of them, from the unknown Beginning, so loud, so stormful-busy, rushed torrent-wise, thundering down, down; and fell all silent,—nothing but some feeble reëcho, which grew ever feebler, struggling up; and Oblivion swallowed them *all.* Thousands more, to the unknown Ending, will follow: and *thou* here, of this present one, hangest as a drop, still sungilt, on the giddy edge; one moment, while the Darkness has not yet ingulfed thee. O Brother! is *that* what thou callest prosaic; of small interest? Of small interest and for *thee?* Awake, poor troubled sleeper: shake off thy torpid nightmare-dream; look, see, behold it, the Flame-image; splendours high as Heaven, terrors deep as Hell: this is God's Creation; this is Man's Life!—Such things has the Writer of these lines witnessed, in this poor Nineteenth Century of ours; and what are all such to the things he yet hopes to witness? Hopes, with truest assurance. 'I have painted so much,' said the good Jean Paul, in his old days, 'and I have never seen the 'Ocean:—the Ocean of Eternity I shall not fail to see!'

Such being the intrinsic quality of this Time, and of all Time whatsoever, might not the Poet who chanced to walk through it find objects enough to paint? What object soever he fixed on, were it the meanest of the mean, let him but paint it in its actual truth, as it swims there, in such environment; world-old, yet new and never-ending; an indestructible portion of the miraculous All,—his picture of it were a Poem. How much more if the object fixed on were not mean, but one already wonderful; the mystic 'actual truth' of which, if it lay not on the surface, yet shone through the surface, and invited even Prosaists to search for it!

The present Writer, who unhappily belongs to that class, has nevertheless a firmer and firmer persuasion of two things: first, as was seen, that Romance exists; secondly, that now, and formerly, and evermore it exists, strictly speaking, in Reality alone. The thing that *is*, what can be *so* wonderful; what, especially to us that *are*, can have such significance? Study Reality, he is ever and anon saying to himself; search out deeper and deeper *its* quite endless mystery: see it, know it; then, whether thou wouldst learn from it, and again teach; or weep over it, or laugh over it, or love it, or despise it, or in any way relate thyself to it, thou hast the firmest enduring basis: *that* hieroglyphic page is one thou canst read on forever, find new meaning in forever.

Finally, and in a word, do not the critics teach us: 'In 'whatsoever thing thou hast thyself felt interest, in that or in 'nothing hope to inspire others with interest'?—In partial obedience to all which, and to many other principles, shall the following small Romance of the *Diamond Necklace* begin to come together. A small Romance, let the reader again and again assure himself, which is no brainweb of mine, or of any other foolish man's; but a fraction of that mystic 'spirit-woven web,' from the 'Loom of Time,' spoken of above. It is an actual Transaction that happened in this Earth of ours. Wherewith our whole business, as already urged, is to paint it truly.

For the rest, an earnest inspection, faithful endeavour has not been wanting, on our part; nor, singular as it may seem, the strictest regard to chronology, geography (or rather in this case, topography), documentary evidence, and what else true historical research would yield. Were there but on the reader's part a kindred openness, a kindred spirit of endeavour! Beshone strongly, on both sides, by such united twofold Philosophy, this poor opaque Intrigue of the *Diamond Necklace* might become quite translucent between us; transfigured, lifted up into the serene of Universal-History; and might hang there like a smallest Diamond Constellation, visible without telescope,—so long as it could.

CHAPTER II.

THE NECKLACE IS MADE.

HERR, or as he is now called Monsieur, Boehmer, to all appearance wanted not that last infirmity of noble and ignoble minds,—a love of fame; he was destined also to be famous more than enough. His outlooks into the world were rather of a smiling character: he has long since exchanged his guttural speech, as far as possible, for a nasal one; his rustic Saxon fatherland for a polished city of Paris, and thriven there. United in partnership with worthy Monsieur Bassange, a sound practical man, skilled in the valuation of all precious stones, in the management of workmen, in the judgment of their work, he already sees himself among the highest of his guild: nay, rather the very highest,—for he has secured, by purchase and hard money paid, the title of King's Jeweller; and can enter the Court itself, leaving all other Jewellers, and even innumerable Gentlemen, Gigmen and small Nobility, to languish in the vestibule. With the costliest ornaments in his pocket, or borne after him by assiduous shop-boys, the happy Boehmer sees high drawing-rooms and sacred *ruelles* fly open, as with talismanic *Sesame;* and the brightest eyes of the whole world grow brighter: to him alone of men the Unapproachable reveals herself in mysterious *négligée;* taking and giving counsel. Do not, on all gala-days and gala-nights, his works praise him? On the gorgeous robes of State, on Court-dresses and Lords' stars, on the diadem of Royalty; better still, on the swan-neck of Beauty, and her queenly garniture from plume-bearing aigrette to shoebuckle on fairy-slipper,—that blinding play of colours is Boehmer's doing: he is *Joaillier-Bijoutier de la Reine.*

Could the man but have been content with it! He could not: Icarus-like, he must mount too high; have his wax-wings melted, and descend prostrate,—amid a cloud of vain goose-quills. One day, a fatal day (of some year, probably, among the *Seventies* of last century[1]), it struck Boehmer: Why should

[1] Except that Madame Campan (*Mémoires,* tome ii.) says the Necklace 'was intended for Du Barry,' one cannot discover, within many years, the date of its manufacture. Du Barry went 'into half-pay' on the 10th of May 1774,—the day when her king died.

not I, who, as Most Christian King's Jeweller, am properly first Jeweller of the Universe,—make a Jewel which the Universe has not matched? Nothing can prevent thee, Boehmer, if thou have the skill to do it. Skill or no skill, answers he, I have the ambition: my Jewel, if not the beautifulest, shall be the dearest. Thus was the Diamond Necklace determined on.

Did worthy Bassange give a willing, or a reluctant consent? In any case he consents; and coöperates. Plans are sketched, consultations held, stucco models made; by money or credit the costliest diamonds come in; cunning craftsmen cut them, set them: proud Boehmer sees the work go prosperously on. Proud man! Behold him on a morning after breakfast: he has stepped down to the innermost workshop, before sallying out; stands there with his laced three-cornered hat, cane under arm; drawing-on his gloves: with nod, with nasal-guttural word, he gives judicious confirmation, judicious abnegation, censure and approval. A still joy is dawning over that bland, blond face of his; he can think, while in many a sacred boudoir he visits the Unapproachable, that an *opus magnum*, of which the world wotteth not, is progressing. At length comes a morning when care has terminated, and joy can not only dawn but shine; the Necklace, which shall be famous and world-famous, is made.

Made we call it, in conformity with common speech: but properly it was not made; only, with more or less spirit of method, arranged and agglomerated. What spirit of method lay in it, might be made; nothing more. But to tell the various Histories of those various Diamonds, from the first making of them; or even, omitting all the rest, from the first digging of them in the far Indian mines! How they lay, for uncounted ages and æons (under the uproar and splashing of such Deucalion Deluges, and Hutton Explosions, with steam enough, and Werner Submersions), silently imbedded in the rock; did nevertheless, when their hour came, emerge from it, and first behold the glorious Sun smile on them, and with their many-coloured glances smiled back on him. How they served next, let us say, as eyes of Heathen Idols, and received worship. How they had then, by fortune of war or theft, been knocked out; and exchanged among camp-sutlers for a little spirituous liquor, and bought by Jews, and worn as signets on the fingers of tawny or white Majesties; and again been lost, with the fingers

too, and perhaps life (as by Charles the Rash, among the mud-ditches of Nanci), in old-forgotten glorious victories: and so, through innumerable varieties of fortune,—had come at last to the cutting-wheel of Boehmer; to be united, in strange fellowship, with comrades also blown together from all ends of the Earth, each with a History of its own! Could these aged stones, the youngest of them Six Thousand years of age and upwards, but have spoken, *there* were an Experience for Philosophy to teach by!—But now, as was said, by little caps of gold, and daintiest rings of the same, they are all being, so to speak, enlisted under Boehmer's flag,—made to take rank and file, in new order, no Jewel asking his neighbour whence he came; and parade there for a season. For a season only; and then —to disperse, and enlist anew *ad infinitum*. In such inexplicable wise are Jewels, and Men also, and indeed all earthly things, jumbled together and asunder, and shovelled and wafted to and fro, in our inexplicable chaos of a World. This was what Boehmer called *making* his Necklace.

So, in fact, do other men speak, and with even less reason. How many men, for example, hast thou heard talk of making money; of making, say, a million and a half of money? Of which million and half, how much, if one were to look into it, had they *made?* The accurate value of their Industry; not a sixpence more. Their making, then, was but, like Boehmer's, a clutching and heaping together;—by and by to be followed also by a dispersion. Made? Thou too-vain individual! were these towered ashlar edifices; were these fair bounteous leas, with their bosky umbrages and yellow harvests; and the sunshine that lights them from above, and the granite rocks and fire-reservoirs that support them from below, made by *thee?* I think, by another. The very shilling that thou hast was dug, by man's force, in Carinthia and Paraguay; smelted sufficiently; and stamped, as would seem, not without the advice of our late Defender of the Faith, his Majesty George the Fourth. Thou hast it, and holdest it; but whether, or in what sense, thou hast *made* any farthing of it, thyself canst not say. If the courteous reader ask, What things, then, are made by man? I will answer him, Very few indeed. A Heroism, a Wisdom (a god-given Volition that has realised itself), is made now and then: for example, some five or six Books, since the Creation,

have been made. Strange that there are not more: for surely every encouragement is held out. Could I, or thou, happy reader, but make one, the world would let us keep it unstolen for Fourteen whole years,—and take what we could get for it.

But, in a word, Monsieur Boehmer has made his Necklace, what he calls made it: happy man is he. From a Drawing, as large as reality, kindly furnished by 'Taunay, Printseller, of the Rue d'Enfer;'[2] and again, in late years, by the Abbé Georgel, in the Second Volume of his *Mémoires*, curious readers can still fancy to themselves what a princely Ornament it was. A row of seventeen glorious diamonds, as large almost as filberts, encircle, not too tightly, the neck, a first time. Looser, gracefully fastened thrice to these, a three-wreathed festoon, and pendants

[2] Frontispiece of the '*Affaire du Collier*, Paris, 1785;' wherefrom Georgel's Editor has copied it. This '*Affaire du Collier*, Paris, 1785,' is not properly a Book; but a bound Collection of such Law-Papers (*Mémoires pour* &c.) as were printed and emitted by the various parties in that famed 'Necklace Trial.' These Law-Papers, bound into Two Volumes quarto; with Portraits, such as the Printshops yielded them at the time; likewise with patches of *Ms.*, containing Notes, Pasquinade-songs, and the like, of the most unspeakable character occasionally constitute this '*Affaire du Collier*;' which the Paris Dealers in Old Books can still procure there. It is one of the largest collections of Falsehoods that exists in print; and, unfortunately, still, after all the narrating and history there has been on the subject, forms our chief means of getting at the truth of that Transaction. The First Volume contains some Twenty-one *Mémoires pour:* not, of course, Historical statements of truth; but Culprits' and Lawyers' statements of what they wished to be believed; each party *lying* according to his ability to lie. To reach the truth, or even any honest guess at the truth, the immensities of rubbish must be sifted, contrasted, rejected: what grain of historical evidence may lie at the bottom is then attainable. Thus, as this Transaction of the Diamond Necklace has been called the 'Largest Lie of the Eighteenth Century,' so it comes to us borne, not unfitly, on a whole illimitable dim Chaos of Lies!

Nay, the Second Volume, entitled *Suite de l'Affaire du Collier*, is still stranger. It relates to the Intrigue and Trial of one Bette d'Etienville, who represents himself as a poor lad that had been kidnapped, blindfolded, introduced to beautiful Ladies, and engaged to get husbands for them; as setting out on this task, and gradually getting quite bewitched and bewildered; —most indubitably, going on to bewitch and bewilder other people on all hands of him: the whole *in consequence* of this 'Necklace Trial,' and the noise it was making! Very curious. The Lawyers did verily busy themselves with this affair of Bette's; there are scarecrow Portraits given, that stood in the Printshops, and no man can know whether the Originals ever so much as existed. It is like the Dream *of* a Dream. The human mind stands stupent; ejaculates the wish that such Gulf of Falsehood would close itself,—before general Delirium supervene, and the Speech of Man become mere incredible meaningless jargon, like that of choughs and daws. Even from Bette, however, by assiduous sifting, one gathers a particle of truth here and there.

enough (simple pear-shaped, multiple star-shaped, or clustering amorphous) encircle it, enwreath it, a second time. Loosest of all, softly flowing round from behind, in priceless catenary, rush down two broad threefold rows ; seem to knot themselves, round a very Queen of Diamonds, on the bosom; then rush on, again separated, as if there were length in plenty; the very tassels of them were a fortune for some men. And now lastly, two other inexpressible threefold rows, also with their tassels, will, when the Necklace is on and clasped, unite themselves behind into a doubly inexpressible *six*-fold row ; and so stream down, together or asunder, over the hind-neck,—we may fancy, like lambent Zodiacal or Aurora-Borealis fire.

All these on a neck of snow slight-tinged with rose-bloom, and within it royal Life : amidst the blaze of lustres ; in sylphish movements, espiegleries, coquetteries, and minuet-mazes ; with every movement a flash of star-rainbow colours, bright almost as the movements of the fair young soul it emblems ! A glorious ornament ; fit only for the Sultana of the World. Indeed, only attainable by such; for it is valued at 1,800,000 livres ; say, in round numbers, and sterling money, between eighty and ninety thousand pounds.

CHAPTER III.

THE NECKLACE CANNOT BE SOLD.

Miscalculating Boehmer ! The Sultana of the Earth shall never wear that Necklace of thine ; no neck, either royal or vassal, shall ever be the lovelier for it. In the present distressed state of our finances, with the American War raging round us, where thinkest thou are eighty thousand pounds to be raised for such a thing ? In this hungry world, thou fool, these five hundred and odd Diamonds, good only for looking at, are intrinsically worth less to us than a string of as many dry Irish potatoes, on which a famishing Sansculotte might fill his belly. Little knowest thou, laughing Joaillier-Bijoutier, great in thy pride of place, in thy pride of *savoir-faire*, what the world

has in store for thee. Thou laughest there; by and by thou wilt laugh on the wrong side of thy face mainly.

While the Necklace lay in stucco effigy, and the stones of it were still 'circulating in Commerce,' Du Barry's was the neck it was meant for. Unhappily, as all dogs, male and female, have but their day, her day is done; and now (so busy has Death been) she sits retired, on mere half-pay, without prospects, at St.-Cyr. A generous France will buy no more neck-ornaments for *her*:—O Heaven! the Guillotine-axe is already forging (North, in Swedish Dalecarlia, by sledge-hammers and fire; South too, by taxes and *tailles*) that will shear her neck in twain!

But, indeed, what of Du Barry? A foul worm; hatched by royal heat, on foul composts, into a flaunting butterfly; now diswinged, and again a worm! Are there not Kings' Daughters and Kings' Consorts; is not Decoration the first wish of a female heart,—often also, if such heart is empty, the last? The Portuguese Ambassador is here, and his rigorous Pombal is no longer Minister: there is an Infanta in Portugal, purposing by Heaven's blessing to wed.—Singular! the Portuguese Ambassador, though without fear of Pombal, praises, but will not purchase.

Or why not our own loveliest Marie-Antoinette, once Dauphiness only; now every inch a Queen: what neck in the whole Earth would it beseem better? It is fit only for her.—Alas, Boehmer! King Louis has an eye for diamonds, but he too is without overplus of money: his high Queen herself answers queenlike, "We have more need of Seventy-fours than of Necklaces." *Laudatur et alget!*—Not without a qualmish feeling, we apply next to the Queen and King of the Two Sicilies.[1] In vain, O Boehmer! In crowned heads there is no hope for thee. Not a crowned head of them can spare the eighty thousand pounds. The age of Chivalry is gone, and that of Bankruptcy is come. A dull, deep, presaging movement rocks all thrones: Bankruptcy is beating down the gate, and no Chancellor can longer barricade her out. She will enter; and the shoreless fire-lava of DEMOCRACY is at her back! Well may Kings, a second time, 'sit still with awful eye,' and think of far other things than Necklaces.

[1] See *Mémoires de Campan*, ii. 1-26.

Thus for poor Boehmer are the mournfulest days and nights appointed; and this high-promising year (1780, as we laboriously guess and gather) stands blacker than all others in his calendar. In vain shall he, on his sleepless pillow, more and more desperately revolve the problem; it is a problem of the insoluble sort, a true 'irreducible case of Cardan:' the Diamond Necklace will not sell.

CHAPTER IV.

AFFINITIES: THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS.

NEVERTHELESS a man's little Work lies not isolated, stranded; a whole busy World, a whole native-element of mysterious never-resting Force, environs it; will catch it up; will carry it forward, or else backward: always, infallibly, either as living growth, or at worst as well-rotted manure, the Thing Done will come to use. Often, accordingly, for a man that had finished any little work, this were the most interesting question: In such a boundless whirl of a world, what hook will it be, and what hooks, that shall catch up this little work of mine; and whirl *it* also,—through such a dance? A question, we need not say, which, in the simplest of cases, would bring the whole Royal Society to a nonplus.—Good Corsican Letitia! while thou nursest thy little Napoleon, and he answers thy mother-smile with those deep eyes of his, a world-famous French Revolution, with Federations of the *Champ de Mars*, and September Massacres, and Bakers' Customers *en queue*, is getting ready: many a Danton and Desmoulins; prim-visaged, Tartuffe-looking Robespierre, as yet all schoolboys; and Marat weeping bitter rheum, as he pounds horse-drugs,—are preparing the fittest arena for him!

Thus too, while poor Boehmer is busy with those Diamonds of his, picking them 'out of Commerce,' and his craftsmen are grinding and setting them; a certain ecclesiastical Coadjutor and Grand Almoner, and prospective Commendator and Cardinal, is in Austria, hunting and giving suppers; for whom mainly it is that Boehmer and his craftsmen so employ them-

selves. Strange enough, once more! The foolish Jeweller at Paris, making foolish trinkets; the foolish Ambassador at Vienna, making blunders and debaucheries: these Two, all uncommunicating, wide asunder as the Poles, are hourly forging for each other the wonderfulest hook-and-eye; which will hook them together, one day,—into artificial Siamese-Twins, for the astonishment of mankind.

Prince Louis de Rohan is one of those select mortals born to honours, as the sparks fly upwards; and, alas, also (as all men are) to troubles no less. Of his genesis and descent much might be said, by the curious in such matters; yet perhaps, if we weigh it well, intrinsically little. He can, by diligence and faith, be traced back some handbreadth or two, some century or two; but after that, merges in the mere 'blood-royal of Brittany;' long, long on this side of the Northern Immigrations, he is not so much as to be sought for;—and leaves the whole space onwards from that, into the bosom of Eternity, a blank, marked only by one point, the Fall of Man! However, and what alone concerns us, his kindred, in these quite recent times, have been much about the Most Christian Majesty; could there pick up what was going. In particular, they have had a turn of some continuance for Cardinalship and Commendatorship. Safest trades these, of the calm, do-nothing sort: in the do-something line, in Generalship, or suchlike (witness poor Cousin Soubise at Rossbach[1]), they might not fare so well. In any case, the actual Prince Louis, Coadjutor at Strasburg, while his uncle the Cardinal-Archbishop has not yet deceased, and left him his dignities, but only fallen sick, already takes his place on one grandest occasion: he, thrice-happy Coadjutor, receives the fair, young, trembling Dauphiness,

[1] Here is the Epigram they made against him on occasion of Rossbach,—in that 'Despotism tempered by Epigrams,' which France was then said to be:

'Soubise dit, la lanterne à la main,
J'ai beau chercher, où diable est mon Armée?
Elle était là pourtant hier matin:
Me l'a-t-on prise, ou l'aurais-je égarée?—

Que vois-je, ô ciel! que mon âme est ravie!
Prodige heureux! la voilà, la voilà!—
Ah, ventrebleu! qu'est-ce donc que cela?
Je me trompais, c'est l'Armée Ennemie!'

LACRETELLE, ii. 206.

Marie-Antoinette, on her first entrance into France; and can there, as Ceremonial Fugleman, with fit bearing and semblance (being a tall man of six-and-thirty), do the needful. Of his other performances up to this date, a refined History had rather say nothing.

In fact, if the tolerating mind will meditate it with any sympathy, what could poor Rohan perform? Performing needs light, needs strength, and a firm clear footing; all of which had been denied him. Nourished, from birth, with the choicest physical spoon-meat, indeed; yet also, with no better spiritual Doctrine and Evangel of Life than a French Court of Louis the Well-beloved could yield; gifted moreover, and this too was but a new perplexity for him, with shrewdness enough to see through much, with vigour enough to despise much; unhappily, not with vigour enough to spurn it from him, and be forever enfranchised of it,—he awakes, at man's stature, with man's wild desires, in a World of the merest incoherent Lies and Delirium; himself a nameless Mass of delirious Incoherences,—covered over at most, and held-in a little, by conventional Politesse, and a Cloak of prospective Cardinal's Plush. Are not intrigues, might Rohan say, the industry of this our Universe; nay is not the Universe itself, at bottom, properly an intrigue? A Most Christian Majesty, in the *Parc-aux-cerfs;* he, thou seest, is the god of this lower world; in the fight of Life, our war-banner and celestial *En-touto-nika* is a Strumpet's Petticoat: these are thy gods, O France!—What, in such singular circumstances, could poor Rohan's creed and world-theory be, that he should 'perform' thereby? Atheism? Alas, no; not even Atheism: only Macchiavelism; and the indestructible faith that 'ginger is hot in the mouth.' Get ever new and better *ginger*, therefore; chew it ever the more diligently: 'tis all thou hast to look to, and that only for a day.

Ginger enough, poor Louis de Rohan: too much of ginger! Whatsoever of it, for the five senses, money, or money's worth, or backstairs diplomacy, can buy; nay for the sixth sense too, the far spicier ginger, Antecedence of thy fellow-creatures,—merited, at least, by infinitely finer housing than theirs. Coadjutor of Strasburg, Archbishop of Strasburg, Grand Almoner of France, Commander of the Order of the Holy Ghost, Cardinal, Commendator of St. Wast d'Arras (one of the fattest benefices

here below): all these shall be housings for Monseigneur: to all these shall his Jesuit Nursing-mother, our vulpine Abbé Georgel, through fair court-weather and through foul, triumphantly bear him; and wrap him with them, fat, somnolent Nurseling as he is.—By the way, a most assiduous, ever-wakeful Abbé is this Georgel; and wholly Monseigneur's. He has scouts dim-flying, far out, in the great deep of the world's business; has spider-threads that overnet the whole world; himself sits in the centre, ready to run. In vain shall King and Queen combine against Monseigneur: "I was at M. de Maurepas's pillow before six,"—persuasively wagging my sleek coif, and the sleek reynard-head under it; I managed it all for him. Here too, on occasion of Reynard Georgel, we could not but reflect what a singular species of creature your Jesuit must have been. Outwardly, you would say, a man; the smooth semblance of a man: inwardly, to the centre, filled with stone! Yet in all breathing things, even in stone Jesuits, are inscrutable sympathies: how else does a Reynard Abbé so loyally give himself, soul and body, to a somnolent Monseigneur;—how else does the poor Tit, to the neglect of its own eggs and interests, nurse-up a huge lumbering Cuckoo; and think its pains all paid, if the soot-brown Stupidity will merely grow bigger and bigger!—Enough, by Jesuitic or other means, Prince Louis de Rohan shall be passively kneaded and baked into Commendator of St. Wast and much else; and truly *such* a Commendator as hardly, since King Thierri, first of the *Fainéans*, founded that Establishment, has played his part there.

Such, however, have Nature and Art combined together to make Prince Louis. A figure thrice-clothed with honours; with plush, and civic and ecclesiastic garniture of all kinds; but in itself little other than an amorphous congeries of contradictions, somnolence and violence, foul passions and foul habits. It is by his plush cloaks and wrappages mainly, as above hinted, that such a figure sticks together; what we call 'coheres,' in any measure; were it not for these, he would flow out boundlessly on all sides. Conceive him farther, with a kind of radical vigour and fire, for he can see clearly at times, and speak fiercely; yet left in this way to stagnate and ferment, and lie overlaid with such floods of fat material: have we not a true image of the shamefulest Mud-volcano, gurgling and sluttishly

simmering, amid continual steamy indistinctness,—except, as was hinted, in wind-*gusts;* with occasional terrifico-absurd mud-explosions!

This, garnish it and fringe it never so handsomely, is, alas, the intrinsic character of Prince Louis. A shameful spectacle: such, however, as the world has beheld many times; as it were to be wished, but is not yet to be hoped, the world might behold no more. Nay, are not all possible delirious incoherences, outward and inward, summed up, for poor Rohan, in this one incrediblest incoherence, that *he*, Prince Louis de Rohan, is named Priest, Cardinal of the Church? A debauched, merely libidinous mortal, lying there quite helpless, *dis*solute (as we well say); whom to see Church *Cardinal*, symbolical *Hinge* or main Corner of the Invisible Holy in this World, an Inhabitant of Saturn might split with laughing,—if he did not rather swoon with pity and horror!

Prince Louis, as ceremonial fugleman at Strasburg, might have hoped to make some way with the fair young Dauphiness; but seems not to have made any. Perhaps, in those great days, so trying for a fifteen-years Bride and Dauphiness, the fair Antoinette was too preoccupied: perhaps, in the very face and looks of Prospective-Cardinal Prince Louis, her fair young soul read, all unconsciously, an incoherent *Roué*-ism, bottomless Mud-volcanoism; from which she by instinct rather recoiled.

However, as above hinted, he is now gone, in these years, on Embassy to Vienna: with 'four-and-twenty pages' (if our remembrance of Abbé Georgel serve) 'of noble birth,' all in scarlet breeches; and such a retinue and parade as drowns even his fat revenue in perennial debt. Above all things, his Jesuit Familiar is with him. For so everywhere they must manage: Eminence Rohan is the cloak, Jesuit Georgel the man or automaton within it. Rohan, indeed, sees Poland a-partitioning; or rather Georgel, with his 'masked Austrian' traitor 'on the ramparts,' sees it for him: but what can he do? He exhibits his four-and-twenty scarlet pages,—who, we find, 'smuggle' to quite unconscionable lengths; rides through a Catholic procession, Prospective-Cardinal though he be, because it is too long and keeps him from an appointment; hunts, gallants; gives suppers, Sardanapalus-wise, the finest ever seen

in Vienna. Abbé Georgel, as we fancy it was, writes a Despatch in his name 'every fortnight;'—mentions in one of these, that 'Maria Theresa stands, indeed, with the handker-'chief in one hand, weeping for the woes of Poland; but with 'the sword in the other hand, ready to cut Poland in sections, 'and take her share.'[2] Untimely joke; which proved to Prince Louis the root of unspeakable chagrins! For Minister D'Aiguillon (much against his duty) communicates the Letter to King Louis; Louis to Du Barry, to season her *souper*, and laughs over it: the thing becomes a court-joke; the filially-pious Dauphiness hears it, and remembers it. Accounts go, moreover, that Rohan spake censuringly of the Dauphiness to her Mother: this probably is but hearsay and false; the devout Maria Theresa disliked him, and even despised him, and vigorously laboured for his recall.

Thus, in rosy sleep and somnambulism, or awake only to quaff the full wine-cup of the Scarlet Woman his Mother, and again sleep and somnambulate, does the Prospective-Cardinal and Commendator pass his days. Unhappy man! This is not a world which was made in sleep; which it is safe to sleep and somnambulate in. In that 'loud-roaring Loom of Time' (where above nine hundred millions of hungry Men, for one item, restlessly weave and work), so many threads fly humming from their 'eternal spindles;' and swift invisible shuttles, far darting, to the Ends of the World,—complex enough! At this hour, a miserable Boehmer in Paris, whom thou wottest not of, is spinning, of diamonds and gold, a paltry thrum that will go nigh to strangle the life out of thee.

Meanwhile Louis the Well-beloved has left, forever, his *Parc-aux-cerfs;* and, amid the scarce-suppressed hootings of the world, taken up his last lodging at St. Denis. Feeling that

[2] *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 1-220. Abbé Georgel, who has given, in the place referred to, a long solemn Narrative of the Necklace Business, passes for the grand authority on it: but neither will he, strictly taken up, abide scrutiny. He is vague as may be; writing in what is called the 'soaped-pig' fashion: yet sometimes you *do* catch him, and hold him. There are hardly above three dates in his whole Narrative. He mistakes several times; perhaps, once or twice, wilfully misrepresents a little. The main incident of the business is misdated by him, almost a twelvemonth. It is to be remembered that the poor Abbé wrote in exile; and with cause enough for prepossessions and hostilities.

it was all over (for the small-pox has the victory, and even Du Barry is off), he, as the Abbé Georgel records, 'made the *amende honorable* to God' (these are his Reverence's own words); had a true repentance of three-days standing; and so, continues the Abbé, 'fell asleep in the Lord.' Asleep in the Lord, Monsieur l'Abbé! If such a mass of Laziness and Lust fell asleep in the Lord, *who*, fanciest thou, is it that falls asleep—elsewhere? Enough that he did fall asleep; that thick-wrapt in the Blanket of the Night, under what keeping we ask not, *he* never through endless Time can, for his own or our sins, insult the face of the Sun any more;—and so now we go onward, if not to less degrees of beastliness, yet at least and worst, to cheering varieties of it.

Louis XVI. therefore reigns (and, under the Sieur Gamain, makes locks); his fair Dauphiness has become a Queen. Eminence Rohan is home from Vienna; to condole and congratulate. He bears a Letter from Maria Theresa; hopes the Queen will not forget old Ceremonial Fuglemen, and friends of the Dauphiness. Heaven and Earth! The Dauphiness Queen will not see him; orders the Letter to be *sent* her. The King himself signifies briefly that he 'will be asked for when wanted'!

Alas! at Court, our motion is the delicatest, unsurest. We go spinning, as it were, on teetotums, by the edges of bottomless deeps. Rest is fall; so is one false whirl. A moment ago, Eminence Rohan seemed waltzing with the best: but, behold, his teetotum has *carried him over;* there is an inversion of the centre of gravity; and so now, heels uppermost, velocity increasing as the time, space as the square of the time,—he rushes.

On a man of poor Rohan's somnolence and violence, the sympathising mind can estimate what the effect was. Consternation, stupefaction, the total jumble of blood, brains and nervous spirits; in ear and heart, only universal hubbub, and louder and louder singing of the agitated air. A fall comparable to that of Satan! Men have, indeed, been driven from Court, and borne it, according to ability. Choiseul, in these very years, retired Parthianlike, with a smile or scowl; and drew half the Court-host along with him. Our Wolsey, though once an *Ego et Rex meus*, could journey, it is said, without strait-waistcoat, to his monastery; and there telling beads, look forward to a still longer journey. The melodious, too soft-strung Racine,

when his King turned his back on him, emitted one meek wail, and submissively—died. But the case of Coadjutor de Rohan differed from all these. No loyalty was in him, that he should die; no self-help, that he should live; no faith, that he should tell beads. His is a mud-volcanic character; incoherent, mad, from the very foundation of it. Think too, that his Courtiership (for how could any nobleness enter there?) was properly a gambling speculation: the loss of his trump Queen of Hearts can bring nothing but flat unredeemed despair. No other game has he, in this world,—or in the next. And then the exasperating *Why?* The *How came it?* For that Rohanic, or Georgelic, sprightliness of the 'handkerchief in one hand, and sword in the other,' if indeed that could have caused it all, has quite escaped him. In the name of Friar Bacon's Head, *what* was it? Imagination, with Desperation to drive her, may fly to all points of Space;—and returns with wearied wings, and no tidings. Behold *me here:* this, which is the first grand certainty for man in general, is the first and last and only one for poor Rohan. And then his *Here!* Alas, looking upwards, he can eye, from his burning marl, the azure realms, once his; and Cousin Countess de Marsan, and so many Richelieus, Polignacs, and other happy angels, male and female, all blissfully gyrating there; while he—!

Nevertheless hope, in the human breast, though not in the diabolic, springs eternal. The outcast Rohan bends all his thoughts, faculties, prayers, purposes, to one object; one object he will attain, or go to Bedlam. How many ways he tries; what days and nights of conjecture, consultation; what written unpublished reams of correspondence, protestation, backstairs diplomacy of every rubric! How many suppers has he eaten; how many given,—in vain! It is his morning song, and his evening prayer. From innumerable falls he rises; only to fall again. Behold him even, with his red stockings, at dusk, in the Garden of Trianon: he has bribed the Concierge; will see her Majesty in spite of Etiquette and Fate; peradventure, pitying his long sad King's-evil, she will touch him and heal him. In vain,—says the Female Historian, Campan.[3] The Chariot of

[3] Madame Campan, in her Narrative, and indeed in her *Memoirs* generally, does not seem to *intend* falsehood: this, in the Business of the Necklace, is saying a great deal. She rather, perhaps, intends the producing of

Majesty shoots rapidly by, with high-plumed heads in it; Eminence is known by his red stockings, but not looked at, only laughed at, and left standing like a Pillar of Salt.

Thus through ten long years, of new resolve and new despondency, of flying from Saverne to Paris, and from Paris to Saverne, has it lasted; hope deferred making the heart sick. Reynard Georgel and Cousin de Marsan, by eloquence, by influence, and being 'at M. de Maurepas's pillow before six,' have secured the Archbishopric, the Grand-Almonership; the Cardinalship (by the medium of Poland); and, lastly, to tinker many rents, and appease the Jews, that fattest Commendatorship, founded by King Thierri the Do-nothing—perhaps with a view to such cases. All good! languidly croaks Rohan; yet all not the one thing needful; alas, the Queen's eyes do not yet shine on me.

Abbé Georgel admits, in his own polite diplomatic way, that the Mud-volcano was much agitated by these trials; and in time quite changed. Monseigneur deviated into cabalistic courses, after elixirs, philtres, and the philosopher's stone; that is, the volcanic steam grew thicker and heavier: at last by Cagliostro's magic (for Cagliostro and the Cardinal by elective affinity must meet), it sank into the opacity of perfect London fog! So too, if Monseigneur grew choleric; wrapped himself up in reserve, spoke roughly to his domestics and dependents,—were not the terrifico-absurd mud-explosions becoming more frequent? Alas, what wonder? Some nine-and-forty winters have now fled over his Eminence (for it is 1783), and his beard falls white to the shaver; but age for him brings no 'benefit of experience.' He is possessed by a fixed-idea!

Foolish Eminence! is the Earth grown all barren and of a snuff colour, because one pair of eyes in it look on thee askance? Surely thou hast thy Body there yet; and what of soul might from the first reside in it. Nay, a warm, snug Body, with not only five senses (sound still, in spite of much

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an impression; which may have appeared to herself to be the right one. But, at all events, she has, here or elsewhere, no notion of historical rigour; she gives hardly any date, or the like; will tell the same thing, in different places, different ways, &c. There is a tradition that Louis XVIII. revised her *Mémoires* before publication. She requires to be read with scepticism everywhere; but yields something in that way.

tear and wear), but most eminent clothing, besides;—clothed with authority over much, with red Cardinal's cloak, red Cardinal's hat; with Commendatorship, Grand-Almonership, so kind have thy Fripiers been; with dignities and dominions too tedious to name. The stars rise nightly, with tidings (for thee too, if thou wilt listen) from the infinite Blue; Sun and Moon bring vicissitudes of season; dressing green, with flower-borderings, and cloth of gold, this ancient ever-young Earth of ours, and filling her breasts with all-nourishing mother's milk. Wilt thou work? The whole Encyclopedia (not Diderot's only, but the Almighty's) is there for thee to spread thy broad faculty upon. Or, if thou have no faculty, no Sense, hast thou not, as already suggested, Senses, to the number of five? What victuals thou wishest, command; with what wine savoureth thee, be filled. Already thou art a false lascivious Priest; with revenues of, say, a quarter of a million sterling; and no mind to mend. Eat, foolish Eminence; eat with voracity,—leaving the shot till *afterwards!* In all this the eyes of Marie-Antoinette can neither help thee nor hinder.

And yet what is the Cardinal, dissolute mud-volcano though he be, more foolish herein than all Sons of Adam? Give the wisest of us once a 'fixed-idea,'—which, though a temporary madness, who has not had?—and see where his wisdom is! The Chamois-hunter serves his doomed seven years in the Quicksilver Mines; returns salivated to the marrow of the backbone; and next morning—goes forth to hunt again. Behold Cardalion King of Urinals; with a woful ballad to his mistress' eyebrow! He blows out, Werter-wise, his foolish existence, because *she* will not have it to keep;—heeds not that there are some five hundred millions of other mistresses in this noble Planet; most likely much such as she. O foolish men! They sell their Inheritance (as their Mother did hers), though it is Paradise, for a crotchet: will they not, in every age, dare not only grape-shot and gallows-ropes, but Hell-fire itself, for better sauce to their victuals? My friends, beware of fixed-ideas.

Here, accordingly, is poor Boehmer with one in his head too! He has been hawking his 'irreducible case of Cardan,' that Necklace of his, these three long years, through all Palaces

and Ambassadors' Hotels, over the old 'nine Kingdoms,' or more of them than there now are: searching, sifting Earth, Sea and Air, for a customer. To take his Necklace in pieces; and so, losing only his manual labour and expected glory, dissolve his fixed-idea, and fixed diamonds, into current ones: this were simply casting out the Devil—from himself; a miracle, and perhaps more! For he too has a Devil, or Devils: one mad object which he strives at; which he too will attain, or go to Bedlam. Creditors, snarling, hound him on from without; mocked Hopes, lost Labours, bear-bait him from within: to these torments his fixed-idea keeps him chained. In six-and-thirty weary revolutions of the Moon, was it wonderful the man's brain had got dried a little?

Behold, one day, being Court-Jeweller, he too bursts, almost as Rohan had done, into the Queen's retirement, or apartment; flings himself (as Campan again has recorded) at her Majesty's feet; and there, with clasped uplifted hands, in passionate nasal-gutturals, with streaming tears and loud sobs, entreats her to do one of two things: Either to buy his Necklace; or else graciously to vouchsafe him her royal permission to drown himself in the River Seine. Her Majesty, pitying the distracted bewildered state of the man, calmly points out the plain third course: *Dépécez votre Collier*, Take your Necklace in pieces;—adding withal, in a tone of queenly rebuke, that if he would drown himself, he at all times could, without her furtherance.

Ah, *had* he drowned himself, with the Necklace in his pocket; and Cardinal Commendator at his skirts! Kings, above all, beautiful Queens, as far-radiant Symbols on the pinnacles of the world, are so exposed to madmen. Should these two fixed-ideas that beset this beautifulest Queen, and almost burst through her Palace-walls, one day *unite*, and this *not* to jump into the River Seine;—what maddest result may be looked for!

CHAPTER V.

THE ARTIST.

If the reader has hitherto, in our too figurative language, seen only the figurative hook and the figurative eye, which Boehmer and Rohan, far apart, were respectively fashioning for each other, he shall now see the cunning Milliner (an actual, unmetaphorical *Milliner*) by whom these two individuals, with their two implements, are brought in contact, and hooked together into stupendous artificial Siamese-Twins;—after which the whole nodus and solution will naturally combine and unfold itself.

Jeanne de Saint-Remi, by courtesy or otherwise, Countess, styled also *of Valois*, and even *of France*, has now, in this year of Grace 1783, known the world for some seven-and-twenty summers; and had crooks in her lot. She boasts herself descended, by what is called *natural* generation, from the Blood-Royal of France: Henri Second, before that fatal tourney-lance entered his right eye and ended him, appears to have had, successively or simultaneously, four—unmentionable women: and so, *in vice* of the third of these, came a certain Henri de Saint-Remi into this world; and, as High and Puissant Lord, ate his victuals and spent his days, on an allotted domain of Fontette, near Bar-sur-Aube, in Champagne. Of High and Puissant Lords, at this Fontette, six other generations followed; and thus ultimately, in a space of some two centuries,—succeeded in realising this brisk little Jeanne de Saint-Remi, here in question. But, ah, what a falling-off! The Royal Family of France has wellnigh forgotten its left-hand collaterals: the last High and Puissant Lord (much clipt by his predecessors), falling into drink, and left by a scandalous world to drink his pitcher *dry*, had to alienate by degrees his whole worldly Possessions, down almost to the indispensable, or inexpressibles; and die at last in the Paris Hôtel-Dieu; glad that it was not on the street. So that he has, indeed, given a sort of bastard royal life to little Jeanne, and her little brother; but not the smallest earthly provender to keep it in. The mother, in her extremity, forms the

wonderfulest connections; and little Jeanne, and her little brother, go out into the highways to beg.[1]

A charitable Countess Boulainvilliers, struck with the little bright-eyed tatterdemalion from the carriage-window, picks her up; has her scoured, clothed; and rears her, in her fluctuating miscellaneous way, to be, about the age of twenty, a nondescript of Mantuamaker, Soubrette, Court-beggar, Fine-lady, Abigail, and Scion-of-Royalty. Sad combination of trades! The Court, after infinite soliciting, puts one off with a hungry dole of little more than thirty pounds a-year. Nay, the audacious Count Boulainvilliers dares, with what purposes he knows best, to offer some suspicious presents![2] Whereupon his good Countess, especially as Mantuamaking languishes, thinks it could not but be fit to go down to Bar-sur-Aube; and there see whether no fractions of that alienated Fontette Property, held perhaps on insecure tenure, may, by terror or cunning, be recoverable. Burning her paper patterns, pocketing her pension till more come, Mademoiselle Jeanne sallies out thither, in her twenty-third year.

Nourished in this singular way, alternating between saloon and kitchen-table, with the loftiest of pretensions, meanest of possessions, our poor High and Puissant Mantuamaker has realised for herself a 'face not beautiful, yet with a certain piquancy;' dark hair, blue eyes; and a character, which the present Writer, a determined student of human nature, declares to be undecipherable. Let the Psychologists try it! Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Valois de France actually lived, and worked, and was: she has even published, at various times, three considerable Volumes of Autobiography, with loose Leaves (in Courts of Justice) of unknown number;[3] wherein he that runs may

[1] *Vie de Jeanne Comtesse de Lamotte* (by Herself), vol. i.

[2] He was of Hebrew descent: grandson of the renowned Jew Bernard, whom Louis XV., and even Louis XIV., used to 'walk with' in the Royal Garden,' when they wanted him to lend them money. See *Souvenirs du Duc de Levis; Mémoires de Duclos*, &c.

[3] Four *Mémoires pour* by her, in this *Affaire du Collier;* like 'Lawyers' tongues turned inside out'! Afterwards One Volume, *Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de* &c. (London, 1788); with Appendix of 'Documents' so-called. This has also been translated into a kind of English. Then Two Volumes, as quoted above: *Vie de Jeanne de* &c.; printed in London,—by way of extorting money *from Paris*. This latter Lying Autobiography of Lamotte was bought-up by French persons in authority. It was the burning of this *Editio Princeps* in the Sèvres Potteries, on the 30th of May 1792, which raised such a smoke that the Legislative Assembly took alarm; and had

read,—but not understand. Strange Volumes! more like the screeching of distracted night-birds (suddenly disturbed by the torch of Police-Fowlers), than the articulate utterance of a rational unfeathered biped. Cheerfully admitting these statements to be all lies; we ask, How any mortal could, or should, *so* lie?

The Psychologists, however, commit one sore mistake; that of searching, in every character named human, for something like a conscience. Being mere contemplative recluses, for most part, and feeling that Morality is the heart of Life, they judge that with all the world it is so. Nevertheless, as practical men are aware, Life can go on in excellent vigour without crotchet of that kind. What is the essence of Life? Volition? Go deeper down, you find a much more universal root and characteristic: Digestion. While Digestion lasts, Life cannot, in philosophical language, be said to be extinct: and Digestion will give rise to Volitions enough; at any rate, to Desires and attempts, which may pass for such. He who looks neither before nor after, any farther than the Larder and Stateroom, which latter is properly the finest compartment of the Larder, will need no World-theory, Creed as it is called, or Scheme of Duties: lightly leaving the world to wag as it likes with any theory or none, his grand object is a theory and practice of ways and means. Not goodness or badness is the type of him; only shiftiness or shiftlessness.

And now, disburdened of this obstruction, let the Psychologists consider it under a bolder view. Consider the brisk Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Saint-Shifty as a Spark of vehement Life, not developed into Will of any kind, yet fully into Desires of all kinds, and cast into such a Life-element as we have seen. Vanity and Hunger; a Princess of the Blood, yet whose father had sold his inexpressibles; uncertain whether fosterdaughter of a fond Countess, with hopes sky-high, or supernumerary Soubrette; with not enough of mantuamaking: in a word, *Gigmanity disgigged;* one of the saddest, pitiable, unpitied predicaments of man! She is of that light unreflecting class,

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an investigation about it, and considerable examining of Potters, &c., till the truth came out. Copies of the book were speedily reprinted after the Tenth of August. It is in English too; and, except in the Necklace part, is not so entirely distracted as the former.

of that light unreflecting sex : *varium semper et mutabile.* And then her Fine-ladyism, though a purseless one : capricious, coquettish, and with all the finer sensibilities of the heart ; now in the rackets, now in the sullens ; vivid in contradictory resolves ; laughing, weeping without reason,—though these acts are said to be signs of reason. Consider too, how she has had to work her way, all along, by flattery and cajolery ; wheedling, eaves-dropping, namby-pambying : how she needs wages, and knows no other productive trades. Thought can hardly be said to exist in her : only Perception and Device. With an understanding lynx-eyed for the surface of things, but which pierces beyond the surface of nothing ; every individual thing (for she has never seized the heart of it) turns up a new face to her every new day, and seems a thing changed, a different thing. Thus sits, or rather vehemently bobs and hovers her vehement mind, in the middle of a boundless many-dancing whirlpool of gilt-shreds, paper-clippings and windfalls,—to which the revolving chaos of my Uncle Toby's Smoke-jack was solidity and regularity. Reader ! thou for thy sins must have met with such fair Irrationals ; fascinating, with their lively eyes, with their quick snappish fancies ; distinguished in the higher circles, in Fashion, even in Literature : they hum and buzz there, on graceful film-wings ;—searching nevertheless with the wonderfulest skill for honey ; '*un*tamable as flies' !

Wonderfulest skill for honey, we say ; and, pray, mark that, as regards this Countess de Saint-Shifty. Her instinct-of-genius is prodigious ; her appetite fierce. In any foraging speculation of the private kind, she, unthinking as you call her, will be worth a hundred thinkers. And so of such untamable flies the untamablest, Mademoiselle Jeanne, is now buzzing down, in the Bar-sur-Aube Diligence ; to inspect the honey-jars of Fontette ; and see and smell whether there be any flaws in them.

Alas, at Fontette, we can, with sensibility, behold straw-roofs we were nursed under ; farmers courteously offer cooked milk, and other country messes : but no soul will part with his Landed Property, for which, though cheap, he declares hard money was paid. The honey-jars are all close, then ?—However, a certain Monsieur de Lamotte, a tall Gendarme, home on furlough from Lunéville, is now at Bar ; pays us attentions ; becomes quite particular in his attentions,—for we have a face

'with a certain piquancy,' the liveliest glib-snappish tongue, the liveliest kittenish manner (not yet hardened into *cat*-hood), with thirty pounds a-year and prospects. M. de Lamotte, indeed, is as yet only a private sentinel; but then a private sentinel in the *Gendarmes:* and did not his father die fighting 'at the head of his company,' at Minden? Why not in virtue of our own Countess-ship dub him too Count; by left-hand collateralism, get him advanced?—Finished before the furlough is done! The untamablest of flies has again buzzed off; in wedlock with M. de Lamotte; if not to get honey, yet to escape spiders; and so lies in garrison at Lunéville, amid coquetries and hysterics, in Gigmanity disgigged,—disconsolate enough.

At the end of four long years (too long), M. de Lamotte, or call him now *Count* de Lamotte, sees good to lay down his fighting-gear (unhappily still only the musket), and become what is by certain moderns called 'a Civilian:' not a Civil-law Doctor; merely a Citizen, one who does not live by being killed. Alas, cold eclipse has all along hung over the Lamotte household. Countess Boulainvilliers, it is true, writes in the most feeling manner; but then the Royal Finances are so deranged! Without personal pressing solicitation, on the spot, no Court-solicitor, were his Pension the meagrest, can hope to better it. At Lunéville the sun, indeed, shines; and there is a kind of Life; but only an Un-Parisian, half or quarter Life; the very tradesmen grow clamorous, and no cunningly-devised fable, ready-money alone will appease them. Commandant Marquis d'Autichamp[4] agrees with Madame Boulainvilliers that a journey to Paris were the project; whither, also, he himself is just going. Perfidious Commandant Marquis! His plan is seen through: he dares to presume to make love to a Scion-of-Royalty; or to hint that he could dare to presume to do it! Whereupon, indignant Count de Lamotte, as we said, throws up his commission, and down his fire-arms, without further delay. The King loses a tall private sentinel; the World has a new blackleg: and Monsieur and Madame de Lamotte take places in the Diligence for Strasburg.

Good Fostermother Boulainvilliers, however, is no longer at Strasburg: she is forward at the Archiepiscopal Palace in Sa-

[4] He is the same Marquis d'Autichamp who was to 'relieve Lyons,' and raise the Siege of Lyons, in Autumn 1793, but could not do it.

verne; on a visit there, to his Eminence Cardinal Commendator, Grand-Almoner Archbishop Prince Louis de Rohan! Thus, then, has Destiny at last brought it about. Thus, after long wanderings, on paths so far separate, has the time come, in this late year 1783, when, of all the nine hundred millions of the Earth's denizens, these preappointed Two behold each other!

The foolish Cardinal, since no sublunary means, not even bribing of the Trianon Concierge, will serve, has taken to the superlunary: he is here, with his fixed-idea and volcanic vaporosity darkening, under Cagliostro's management, into thicker and thicker opaque,—of the Black-Art itself. To the glance of hungry genius, Cardinal and Cagliostro could not but have meaning. A flush of astonishment, a sigh over boundless wealth (for the mountains of debt lie invisible) in the hands of boundless Stupidity; some vague looming of indefinite hope: all this one can well fancy. But, alas, what, to a high plush Cardinal, is a now insolvent Scion-of-Royalty,—though with a face of some piquancy? The good Fostermother's visit, in any case, can last but three days; then, amid old namby-pambyings, with effusions of the nobler sensibilities and tears of pity at least for oneself, Countess de Lamotte, and husband, must off with her to Paris, and new possibilities at Court. Only when the sky again darkens, can this vague looming from Saverne look out, by fits, as a cheering weather-sign.

CHAPTER VI.

WILL THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS UNITE?

However, the sky, according to custom, is not long in darkening again. The King's finances, we repeat, are in so distracted a state! No D'Ormesson, no Joly de Fleury, wearied with milking the already dry, will increase that scandalous Thirty Pounds of a Scion-of-Royalty by a single doit. Calonne himself, who has a willing ear and encouraging word for all mortals whatsoever, only with difficulty, and by aid of Madame of France,[1] raises it to some still miserable Sixty-five. Worst

[1] See Campan.

of all, the good Fostermother Boulainvilliers, in few months, suddenly dies : the wretched widower, sitting there, with his white handkerchief, to receive condolences, with closed shutters, mortuary tapestries, and sepulchral cressets burning (which, however, the instant the condolences are gone, he blows out, to save oil), has the audacity again, amid crocodile tears, to—drop hints![2] Nay more, he, wretched man in all senses, abridges the Lamotte table ; will besiege virtue both in the positive and negative way. The Lamottes, wintry as the world looks, cannot be gone too soon.

As to Lamotte the husband, he, for shelter against much, decisively dives down to the 'subterranean shades of Rascaldom ;' gambles, swindles ; can hope to live, miscellaneously, if not by the Grace of God, yet by the Oversight of the Devil, —for a time. Lamotte the wife also makes her packages : and waving the unseductive Count Boulainvilliers Save-all a disdainful farewell, removes to the *Belle Image* in Versailles ; there within wind of Court, in attic apartments, on poor water-gruel board, resolves to await what can betide. So much, in few months of this fateful year 1783, has come and gone.

Poor Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Lamotte Valois, Ex-Mantuamaker, Scion-of-Royalty ! What eye, looking into those bare attic apartments and water-gruel platters of the *Belle Image*, but must, in spite of itself, grow dim with almost a kind of tear for thee ! There thou art, with thy quick lively glances, face of a certain piquancy, thy gossamer untamable character, snappish sallies, glib all-managing tongue ; thy whole incarnated, garmented and so sharply appetent 'spark of Life ;' cast down alive into this World, without vote of thine (for the Elective Franchises have not yet got that length) ; and wouldst so fain live there. Paying scot-and-lot ; providing, or fresh-scouring silk court-dresses ; 'always keeping a gig' ! Thou must hawk and shark to and fro, from anteroom to anteroom ; become a kind of terror to all men in place, and women that influence such ; dance not light Ionic measures, but attendance merely ; have weepings, thanksgiving effusions, aulic, almost forensic, eloquence : perhaps eke-out thy thin livelihood by some coquetries, in the small way ;—and so, most poverty-stricken, cold-blighted, yet with young keen blood struggling against it, spin

[2] *Vie de Jeanne de Lamotte, &c. écrite par elle-même*, vol. i.

forward thy unequal feeble thread, which the Atropos-scissors will soon clip!

Surely now, if ever, were that vague looming from Saverne welcome, as a weather-sign. How doubly welcome is his plush Eminence's personal arrival!—for with the earliest spring he has come in person, as he periodically does; vaporific, driven by his fixed-idea.

Genius, of the mechanical-practical kind, what is it but a bringing together of two Forces that fit each other, that will give birth to a third? Ever, from Tubalcain's time, Iron lay ready hammered; Water, also, was boiling and bursting: nevertheless, for want of a genius, there was as yet no Steam-engine. In his Eminence Prince Louis, in that huge, restless, incoherent Being of his, depend on it, brave Countess, there are Forces deep, manifold; nay, a fixed-idea concentrates the whole huge Incoherence as it were into one Force: cannot the eye of genius discover its *fellow?*

Communing much with the Court *valetaille*, our brave Countess has more than once heard talk of Boehmer, of his Necklace, and threatened death by water; in the course of gossiping and tattling, this topic from time to time emerges; is commented upon with empty laughter,—as if there lay no farther meaning in it. To the common eye there is indeed none: but to the eye of genius? In some moment of inspiration, the question rises on our brave Lamotte: Were not *this*, of all extant Forces, the cognate one that would unite with Eminence Rohan's? Great moment, light-beaming, fire-flashing; like birth of Minerva; like all moments of Creation! Fancy how pulse and breath flutter, almost stop, in the greatness: the great not Divine Idea, the great Diabolic Idea, is too big for her.—Thought (how often must we repeat it?) rules the world. Fire and, in a less degree, Frost; Earth and Sea (for what is your swiftest ship, or steamship, but a *Thought*—embodied in wood?); Reformed Parliaments, rise and ruin of Nations,—sale of Diamonds: all things obey Thought. Countess de Saint-Remi de Lamotte, by power of Thought, is now a made woman. With force of genius she represses, crushes deep down, her Undivine Idea; bends all her faculty to realise it. Prepare thyself, Reader, for a series of the most surprising Dramatic Representations ever exhibited on any stage.

We hear tell of Dramatists, and scenic illusion how 'natural,' how illusive it was: if the spectator, for some half-moment, can half-deceive himself into the belief that it was real, he departs doubly content. With all which, and much more of the like, I have no quarrel. But what must be thought of the Female Dramatist who, for eighteen long months, can exhibit the beautifulest Fata-morgana to a plush Cardinal, wide awake, with fifty years on his head; and so lap him in her scenic illusion that he never doubts but it is all firm earth, and the pasteboard Coulisse-trees are producing Hesperides apples? Could Madame de Lamotte, then, have written a *Hamlet?* I conjecture, not. More goes to the writing of a *Hamlet* than completest 'imitation' of all characters and things in this Earth; there goes, before and beyond all, the rarest *understanding* of these, insight into their hidden essences and harmonies. Erasmus's Ape, as is known in Literary History, sat by while its Master was shaving, and 'imitated' every point of the process; but its own foolish beard grew never the smoother.

As in looking at a finished Drama, it were nowise meet that the spectator first of all got behind the scenes, and saw the burnt-corks, brayed-resin, thunder-barrels, and withered hunger-bitten men and women, of which such heroic work was made: so here with the reader. A peep into the side-scenes shall be granted him, from time to time. But, on the whole, repress, O reader, that too insatiable scientific curiosity of thine; let thy *æsthetic* feeling first have play; and witness what a Prospero's-grotto poor Eminence Rohan is led into, to be pleased he knows not why.

Survey first what we might call the stage-lights, orchestra, general structure of the theatre, mood and condition of the audience. The theatre is the World, with its restless business and madness; near at hand rise the royal Domes of Versailles, mystery around them, and as background the memory of a thousand years. By the side of the River Seine walks, haggard, wasted, a Joaillier-Bijoutier de la Reine, with Necklace in his pocket. The audience is a drunk Christopher Sly in the fittest humour. A fixed-idea, driving him headlong over steep places, like that of the Gadarenes' Swine, has produced a deceptibility, as of desperation, that will clutch at straws. Understand one other word: Cagliostro is prophesying to him! The Quack of

Quacks has now for years had him in leading. Transmitting 'predictions in cipher;' questioning, before Hieroglyphic Screens, Columbs in a state of innocence, for elixirs of life, and philosopher's stone; unveiling, in fuliginous clear-obscure, an imaginary majesty of Nature; he isolates him more and more from all unpossessed men. Was it not enough that poor Rohan had become a dissolute, somnolent-violent, ever-vapoury Mud-volcano; but black Egyptian magic must be laid on him!

If perhaps, too, our Countess de Lamotte, with her blandishments—? For though not beautiful, she 'has a certain piquancy' *et cetera!*—Enough, his poor Eminence sits in the fittest place, in the fittest mood: a newly-awakened Christopher Sly; and with his 'small ale' too beside him. Touch, only, the lights with firetipt rod; and let the orchestra, soft-warbling, strike up their fara-lara fiddle-diddle-dee!

CHAPTER VII.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

Such a soft-warbling fara-lara was it to his Eminence, when, in early January of the year 1784, our Countess first, mysteriously, and under seal of sworn secrecy, hinted to him that, with her winning tongue and great talent as Anecdotic Historian, she had worked a passage to the ear of Queen's Majesty itself.[1] Gods! dost *thou* bring with thee airs from Heaven? Is thy face yet radiant with some reflex of that Brightness beyond bright?—Men with fixed-idea are not as other men. To listen to a plain varnished tale, such as your Dramatist can fashion; to ponder the words; to snuff them up, as Ephraim did the east-wind, and grow flatulent and drunk with them: what else could poor Eminence do? His poor somnolent, so swift-rocked soul feels a new element infused into it; turbid resinous light, wide-coruscating, glares over the waste of his imagination. Is he interested in the mysterious tidings? Hope has seized them; there is in the world nothing else that interests him.

[1] Compare Rohan's *Mémoires pour* (there are four of them), in the *Affaire du Collier*, with Lamotte's four. They go on in the way of controversy, of argument and response.

The secret friendship of Queens is not a thing to be let sleep: ever new Palace Interviews occur;—yet in deepest privacy; for how should her Majesty awaken so many tongues of Principalities and Nobilities, male and female, that spitefully watch her? Above all, however, 'on the 2d of February,' that day of 'the Procession of blue Ribands,'[2] much was spoken of: somewhat, too, of Monseigneur de Rohan!—Poor Monseigneur, hadst thou *three* long ears, thou'dst hear her.

But will she not, perhaps, in some future priceless Interview, speak a good word for thee? Thyself shalt speak it, happy Eminence; at least, write it: our tutelary Countess will be the bearer!—On the 21st of March goes off that long exculpatory imploratory Letter: it is the first Letter that went off from Cardinal to Queen; to be followed, in time, by 'above two hundred others;' which are graciously answered by verbal Messages, nay at length by Royal Autographs on gilt paper,—the whole delivered by our tutelary Countess.[3] The tutelary Countess comes and goes, fetching and carrying; with the gravity of a Roman Augur, inspects those extraordinary chicken-bowels, and draws prognostics from them. Things are in fair train: the Dauphiness took some offence at Monseigneur, but the Queen has nigh forgotten it. No inexorable Queen; ah no! So good, so free, light-hearted; only sore beset with malicious Polignacs and others;—at times, also, short of money.

Marie-Antoinette, as the reader well knows, has been much blamed for want of Etiquette. Even now, when the other accusations against her have sunk down to oblivion and the Father of Lies, this of wanting Etiquette survives her;—in the Castle of Ham, at this hour,[4] M. de Polignac and Company may be wringing their hands, not without an oblique glance at *her* for bringing them thither. She indeed discarded Etiquette; once, when her carriage broke down, she even entered a hackney-coach. She would walk, too, at Trianon, in mere straw-hat, and perhaps muslin gown! Hence, the Knot of Etiquette being loosed, the Frame of Society broke up; and those astonishing 'Horrors of the French Revolution' supervened. On

[2] Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs* (London, 1788).

[3] See Georgel: see Lamotte's *Mémoires;* in her Appendix of 'Documents' to that volume certain of these Letters are given.

[4] A.D. 1833.

what Damocles' hairs must the judgment-sword hang over this distracted Earth!

Thus, however, it was that Tenterden Steeple brought, an influx of the Atlantic on us, and so Goodwin Sands. Thus too, might it be that because Father Noah took the liberty of, say, rinsing out his wine-vat, his Ark was floated off, and a world drowned.—Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! For, if thy Being came to thee out of old Hapsburg Dynasties, came it not also (like my own) out of Heaven? *Sunt lachrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.* Oh, is there a man's heart that thinks, without pity, of those long months and years of slow-wasting ignominy;—of thy Birth, soft-cradled in Imperial Schönbrunn, the winds of heaven not to visit thy face too roughly, thy foot to light on softness, thy eye on splendour; and then of thy Death, or hundred Deaths, to which the Guillotine and Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar was but the merciful end? Look *there*, O man born of woman! The bloom of that fair face is wasted, the hair is gray with care; the brightness of those eyes is quenched, their lids hang drooping, the face is stony pale as of one living in death. Mean weeds, which her own hand has mended,[5] attire the Queen of the World. The death-hurdle, where thou sittest pale motionless, which only curses environ, has to stop: a people, drunk with vengeance, will drink it again in full draught, looking at thee there. Far as the eye reaches, a multitudinous sea of maniac heads; the air deaf with their triumph-yell! The Living-dead must shudder with yet one other pang; her startled blood yet again suffuses with the hue of agony that pale face, which she hides with her hands. There is, then, *no* heart to say, God pity thee? O, think not of these; think of HIM whom thou worshippest, the Crucified,—who also treading the wine-press *alone*, fronted sorrow still deeper; and triumphed over it, and made it holy; and built of it a 'Sanctuary of Sorrow,' for thee and all the wretched! Thy path of thorns is nigh ended. One long last look at the Tuileries, where thy step was once so light,—where thy children shall not dwell. The head is on the block; the axe rushes—Dumb lies the World; that wild-yelling World, and all its madness, is behind thee.

[5] Weber, *Mémoires concernant Marie-Antoinette* (London, 1809), tome iii. notes, p. 106.

Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! Rest yet in thy innocent gracefully heedless seclusion, unintruded on by *me*, while rude hands have not yet desecrated it. Be the curtains, that shroud-in (if for the last time on this Earth) a Royal Life, still sacred to me. *Thy* fault, in the French Revolution, was that thou wert the Symbol of the Sin and Misery of a thousand years; that with Saint-Bartholomews and Jacqueries, with Gabelles and Dragonades and Parcs-aux-cerfs, the heart of mankind was filled full,—and foamed over, into all-involving madness. To no Napoleon, to no Cromwell wert thou wedded: such sit not in the highest rank, of themselves; are raised on high by the shaking and confounding of all the ranks! As poor peasants, how happy, worthy had ye two been! But by evil destiny ye were made a King and Queen of; and so both once more—are become an astonishment and a by-word to all times.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS WILL UNITE.

"Countess de Lamotte, then, had penetrated into the confidence of the Queen? Those gilt-paper Autographs were actually written by the Queen?" Reader, forget not to repress that too insatiable scientific curiosity of thine! What I know is, that a certain Villette-de-Rétaux, with military whiskers, denizen of Rascaldom, comrade there of Monsieur le Comte, is skilful in imitating hands. Certain it is also, that Madame la Comtesse has penetrated to the Trianon—Doorkeeper's. Nay, as Campan herself must admit, she has met, 'at a Man-midwife's in Versailles,' with worthy Queen's-valet Lesclaux,—or Desclos, for there is no uniformity in it. With these, or the like of these, she in the back-parlour of the Palace itself (if late enough), may pick a merrythought, sip the foam from a glass of Champagne. No farther seek her honours to disclose, for the present; or anatomically dissect, as we said, those extraordinary chicken-bowels, from which *she*, and she alone, can read Decrees of Fate, and also realise them.

Sceptic, seest thou his Eminence waiting there, in the moonlight, hovering to and fro on the back terrace, till she come out

—from the ineffable Interview?[1] He is close muffled; walks restlessly observant; shy also, and courting the shade. She comes: up closer with thy capote, O Eminence, down with thy broadbrim; for she has an escort! 'Tis but the good Monsieur Queen's-valet Lesclaux: and now he is sent back again, as no longer needful. Mark him, Monseigneur, nevertheless; thou wilt see him yet another time. Monseigneur marks little: his heart is in the ineffable Interview, in the gilt-paper Autograph alone.—Queen's-valet Lesclaux? Methinks, he has much the stature of Villette, denizen of Rascaldom! Impossible!

How our Countess managed with Cagliostro? Cagliostro, gone from Strasburg, is as yet far distant, winging his way through dim Space; will not be here for months: only his 'predictions in cipher' are here. Here or there, however, Cagliostro, to our Countess, can be useful. At a glance, the eye of genius has descried him to be a bottomless slough of falsity, vanity, gulosity and thick-eyed stupidity: of foulest material, but of fattest;—fit compost for the Plant she is rearing. Him who has deceived all Europe she can undertake to deceive. His Columbs, demonic Masonries, Egyptian Elixirs, what is all this to the light-giggling exclusively practical Lamotte? It runs off from her, as all speculation, good, bad and indifferent, has always done, 'like water from one in wax-cloth dress.' With the lips meanwhile she can honour it; Oil of Flattery, the best patent antifriction known, subdues all irregularities whatsoever.

On Cagliostro, again, on his side, a certain uneasy feeling might, for moments, intrude itself; the raven loves not ravens. But what can he do? Nay, she is partly playing *his* game: can he not spill her full cup yet, at the right season, and pack her out of doors? Oftenest, in their joyous orgies, this light fascinating Countess,—who perhaps has a design on *his* heart, seems to him but one other of those light *Papiliones*, who have fluttered round him in all climates; whom with grim muzzle he has snapt by the thousand.

Thus, what with light fascinating Countess, what with Quack of Quacks, poor Eminence de Rohan lies safe; his mud-

[1] See Georgel.

volcano placidly simmering in thick Egyptian haze: withdrawn from all the world. Moving figures, as of men, he sees; takes not the trouble to look at. Court-cousins rally him; are answered in silence; or, if it go too far, in mud-explosions terrifico-absurd. Court-cousins and all mankind are unreal shadows merely; Queen's favour the only substance.

Nevertheless, the World, on its side too, has an existence; lies not idle in these days. It has got its Versailles Treaty signed, long months ago; and the plenipotentiaries all home again, for votes of thanks. Paris, London and other great Cities and small, are working, intriguing; dying, being born. There, in the Rue Taranne, for instance, the once noisy Denis Diderot has fallen silent enough. Here also, in Bolt Court, old Samuel Johnson, like an over-wearied Giant, must lie down, and slumber without dream;—the rattling of carriages and wains, and all the world's din and business, rolling by, as ever, from of old.—Sieur Boehmer, however, has not yet drowned himself in the Seine; only walks haggard, wasted, purposing to do it.

News (by the merest accident in the world) reach Sieur Boehmer of Madame's new favour with her Majesty! Men will do much before they drown. Sieur Boehmer's Necklace is on Madame's table, his guttural-nasal rhetoric in her ear: he will abate many a pound and penny of the first just price; he will give cheerfully a Thousand Louis-d'or, as *cadeau*, to the generous Scion-of-Royalty that shall persuade her Majesty. The man's importunities grow quite annoying to our Countess; who, in her glib way, satirically prattles how she has been bored,—to Monseigneur, among others.

Dozing on down cushions, far inwards, with soft ministering Hebes, and luxurious appliances; with ranked Heyducs, and a *Valetaille* innumerable, that shut-out the prose-world and its discord: thus lies Monseigneur, in enchanted dream. Can he, even in sleep, forget his tutelary Countess, and her service? By the delicatest presents he alleviates her distresses, most undeserved. Nay, once or twice, gilt Autographs, from a Queen,—with whom he is evidently rising to unknown heights in favour,—have done Monseigneur the honour to make him *her* Majesty's Grand Almoner, when the case was pressing. Mon-

seigneur, we say, has had the honour to disburse charitable cash, on her Majesty's behalf, to this or the other distressed deserving object : say only to the length of a few thousand pounds, advanced from his own funds ;—her Majesty being at the moment so poor, and charity a thing that will not wait. Always Madame, good, foolish, gadding creature, takes charge of delivering the money.—Madame can descend from her attics, in the *Belle Image ;* and feel the smiles of Nature and Fortune, a little ; so bounteous has the Queen's Majesty been.[2]

To Monseigneur the power of money over highest female hearts had never been incredible. Presents have, many times, worked wonders. But then, O Heavens, *what* present? Scarcely were the Cloud-Compeller himself, all coined into new Louis-d'or, worthy to alight in such a lap. Loans, charitable disbursements, however, as we see, are permissible ; these, by defect of payment, may become presents. In the vortex of his Eminence's day-dreams, lumbering multiform slowly round, this of importunate Boehmer and his Necklace, from time to time, turns up. Is the Queen's Majesty at heart desirous of it ; but again, at the moment, too poor? Our tutelary Countess answers vaguely, mysteriously ;—confesses at last, under oath of secrecy, her own private suspicion that the Queen wants this same Necklace, of all things ; but dare not, for a stingy husband, buy it. She, the Countess de Lamotte, will look farther into the matter ; and, if aught serviceable to his Eminence can be suggested, will in a good way suggest it, in the proper quarter.

Walk warily, Countess de Lamotte ; for now, with thickening breath, thou approachest the moment of moments ! Principalities and Powers, *Parlement, Grand Chambre* and *Tournelle*, with all their whips and gibbet-wheels ; the very Crack of Doom hangs over thee, if thou trip. Forward, with nerve of iron, on shoes of felt ; *like* a Treasure-digger, in silence, looking neither to the right nor left,—where yawn abysses deep as the Pool, and all Pandemonium hovers, eager to rend thee into rags!

[2] Georgel ; Rohan's four *Mémoires pour ;* Lamotte's four.

CHAPTER IX.

PARK OF VERSAILLES.

Or will the reader incline rather, taking the other and sunny side of the matter, to enter that Lamottic-Circean theatrical establishment of Monseigneur de Rohan; and see there how, under the best of Dramaturgists, Melodrama with sweeping pall flits past him; while the enchanted Diamond fruit is gradually ripening, to fall by a shake?

The 28th of July, of this same momentous 1784, has come; and with it the most rapturous tumult into the heart of Monseigneur. Ineffable expectancy stirs-up his whole soul, with the much that lies therein, from its lowest foundations: borne on wild seas to Armida Islands, yet as is fit, through Horror dim-hovering round, he tumultuously rocks. To the Château, to the Park! This night the Queen will meet thee, the Queen herself: so far has our tutelary Countess brought it. What can ministerial impediments, Polignac intrigues, avail against the favour, nay—Heaven and Earth!—perhaps the tenderness of a Queen? She vanishes from amid their meshwork of Etiquette and Cabal; descends from her celestial Zodiac, to thee a shepherd of Latmos. Alas, a white-bearded pursy shepherd, fat and scant of breath! Who can account for the taste of females? But thou, burnish-up thy whole faculties of gallantry, thy fifty-years experience of the sex; this night, or never!—In such unutterable meditations does Monseigneur restlessly spend the day; and long for darkness, yet dread it.

Darkness has at length come. The perpendicular rows of Heyducs, in that Palais or Hôtel de Strasbourg, are all cast horizontal, prostrate in sleep; the very Concierge resupine, with open mouth, audibly drinks-in nepenthe; when Monseigneur, 'in blue greatcoat, with slouched hat,' issues softly, with his henchman Planta of the Grisons, to the Park of Versailles. Planta must loiter invisible in the distance; Slouched-hat will wait here, among the leafy thickets; till our tutelary Countess, 'in black domino,' announce the moment, which surely must be near.

The night is of the darkest for the season; no Moon; warm, slumbering July, in motionless clouds, drops fatness over the Earth. The very stars from the Zenith see not Monseigneur; see only his and the world's cloud-covering, fringed with twilight in the far North. Midnight, telling itself forth from these shadowy Palace Domes? All the steeples of Versailles, the villages around, with metal tongue, and huge Paris itself dull-droning, answer drowsily, Yes! Sleep rules this Hemisphere of the World. From Arctic to Antarctic, the Life of our Earth lies all, in long swaths, or rows (like those rows of Heyducs and snoring Concierge), successively mown down, from vertical to horizontal, by Sleep! Rather curious to consider.

The flowers are all asleep in Little Trianon, the roses folded-in for the night; but the Rose of Roses still wakes. O wondrous Earth! O doubly wondrous Park of Versailles, with Little and Great Trianon,—and a scarce-breathing Monseigneur! Ye Hydraulics of Lenôtre, that also slumber, with stop-cocks, in your deep leaden chambers, babble not of *him*, when ye arise. Ye odorous balm-shrubs, huge spectral Cedars, thou sacred Boscage of Hornbeam, ye dim Pavilions of the Peerless, whisper not! Moon, lie silent, hidden in thy vacant cave; no star look down: let neither Heaven nor Hell peep through the blanket of the Night, to cry, Hold, Hold!—The Black Domino? Ha! Yes!—With stouter step than might have been expected, Monseigneur is under way; the Black Domino had only to whisper, low and eager: "In the Hornbeam Arbour!" And now, Cardinal, O now!—Yes, there hovers the white Celestial; 'in white robe of *linon mouchetê*,' finer than moonshine; a Juno by her bearing: there, in that bosket! Monseigneur, down on thy knees; never can red breeches be better wasted. O, he would kiss the royal shoetie, or its shadow if there were one: not words; only broken gaspings, murmuring prostrations, eloquently speak his meaning. But, ah, behold! Our tutelary Black Domino, in haste, with vehement whisper: "*On vient.*" The white Juno drops a fairest Rose, with these ever-memorable words, "*Vous savez ce que cela veut dire*, You know what that means;" vanishes in the thickets, the Black Domino hurrying her with eager whisper of "*Vite, vite*, Away, away!" for the sound of foot-

steps (doubtless from Madame and Madame d'Artois, unwelcome sisters that they are!) is approaching fast. Monseigneur picks-up his Rose; runs as for the King's plate, almost overturns poor Planta, whose laugh assures him that all is safe.[1]

O Ixion de Rohan, happiest mortal of this world, since the first Ixion, of deathless memory,—who nevertheless, in that cloud-embrace, begat strange Centaurs! Thou art Prime Minister of France without peradventure: is not this the Rose of Royalty, worthy to become ottar of roses, and yield perfume forever? How *thou*, of all people, wilt contrive to govern France, in these very peculiar times—But that is little to the matter. There, doubtless, is thy Rose (which, methinks, it were well to have a Box or Casket made for): nay, was there not in the dulcet of thy Juno's "*Vous savez*" a kind of trepidation, a quaver,—as of still deeper meanings!

Reader, there is hitherto no item of this miracle that is not historically proved and *true*.—In distracted black-magical phantasmagory, adumbrations of yet higher and highest Dalliances[2] hover stupendous in the background: whereof your Georgels, and Campans, and other official characters *can* take no notice! There, in distracted black-magical phantasmagory, let these hover. The truth of them for us is that they do so hover. The truth of them in itself is known only to three persons: Dame self-styled Countess de Lamotte; the Devil; and Philippe Egalité,—who furnished money and facts for the Lamotte *Memoirs*, and, before guillotinement, begat the present King of the French.

Enough that Ixion de Rohan, lapsed almost into deliquium, by such sober certainty of waking bliss, is the happiest of all men; and his tutelary Countess the dearest of all women, save one only. On the 25th of August (so strong still are those villanous Drawing-room cabals) he goes, weeping, but submis-

[1] Compare Georgel, Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs*, and the *Mémoires pour* of the various parties, especially Gay d'Oliva's. Georgel places the scene in the year 1785; quite wrong. Lamotte's 'royal Autographs' (as given in the Appendix to *Mémoires Justificatifs*) seem to be misdated as to the day of the month. There is endless confusion of dates.

[2] Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs;* Ms. Songs in the *Affaire du Collier*, &c. &c. Nothing can exceed the brutality of these things (unfit for Print or Pen); which nevertheless found believers,—increase of believers, in the public exasperation; and did the Queen, say all her historians, incalculable damage.

sive, by order of a gilt Autograph, home to Saverne; till farther dignities can be matured for him. He carries his Rose, now considerably faded, in a Casket of fit price; may, if he so please, perpetuate it as *pot-pourri*. He names a favourite walk in his Archiepiscopal pleasure-grounds, *Promenade de la Rose;* there let him court digestion, and loyally somnambulate till called for.

I notice it as a coincidence in chronology, that, few days after this date, the Demoiselle (or even, for the last month, Baroness) Gay d'Oliva began to find Countess de Lamotte 'not at home,' in her fine Paris hotel, in her fine Charonne country-house; and went no more, with Villette, and such pleasant dinner-guests, and her, to see Beaumarchais' *Mariage de Figaro*[3] running its hundred nights.

CHAPTER X.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

"THE Queen?" Good reader, *thou* surely art not a Partridge the Schoolmaster, or a Monseigneur de Rohan, to mistake the stage for a reality!—"But who this Demoiselle d'Oliva was?" Reader, let us remark rather how the labours of our Dramaturgic Countess are increasing.

New actors I see on the scene; not one of whom shall guess what the other is doing; or, indeed, know rightly what himself is doing. For example, cannot Messieurs de Lamotte and Villette, of Rascaldom, like Nisus and Euryalus, take a midnight walk of contemplation, with 'footsteps of Madame and Madame d'Artois' (since all footsteps are much the same), without offence to any one? A Queen's Similitude can believe that a Queen's Self, for frolic's sake, is looking at her through the thickets;[1] a terrestrial Cardinal can kiss with devotion a celestial Queen's slipper, or Queen's Similitude's slipper,—and no one but a Black Domino the wiser. All these shall follow each his precalculated course; for their inward mechanism is known, and fit wires hook themselves on this. To Two only is a clear

[3] Gay d'Oliva's First *Mémoire pour*, p. 37.
[1] See Lamotte; see Gay d'Oliva.

belief vouchsafed: to Monseigneur, a clear belief founded on stupidity; to the great creative Dramaturgist, sitting at the heart of the whole mystery, a clear belief founded on completest insight. Great creative Dramaturgist! How, like Schiller, 'by 'union of the Possible with the Necessarily-existing, she brings 'out the'—Eighty thousand Pounds! Don Aranda, with his triple-sealed missives and hoodwinked secretaries, bragged justly that he cut-down the Jesuits in one day; but here, without ministerial salary, or King's favour, or any help beyond her own black domino, labours a greater than he. How she advances, stealthily, steadfastly, with Argus eye and ever-ready brain; with nerve of iron, on shoes of felt! O worthy to have intrigued for Jesuitdom, for Pope's Tiara;—to have been Pope Joan thyself, in those old days; and as Arachne of Arachnes, sat in the centre of that stupendous spider-web, which, reaching from Goa to Acapulco, and from Heaven to Hell, overnetted the thoughts and souls of men!—Of which spider-web stray tatters, in favourable dewy mornings, even yet become visible.

The Demoiselle d'Oliva? She is a Parisian Demoiselle of three-and-twenty, tall, blond, and beautiful;[2] from unjust guardians, and an evil world, she has had somewhat to suffer.

'In this month of June 1784,' says the Demoiselle herself, in her (judicial) Autobiography, 'I occupied a small apartment 'in the Rue du Jour, Quartier St. Eustache. I was not far from 'the Garden of the Palais-Royal; I had made it my usual 'promenade.' For, indeed, the real God's-truth is, I was a Parisian unfortunate-female, with moderate custom; and one must go where his market lies. 'I frequently passed three or 'four hours of the afternoon there, with some women of my ac- 'quaintance, and a little child of four years old, whom I was 'fond of, whom his parents willingly trusted with me. I even 'went thither alone, except for him, when other company failed.

[2] I was then presented 'to two Ladies, one of whom was remarkable for the richness of her shape: she had blue eyes and chestnut hair' (Bette d'Etienville's Second *Mémoire pour;* in the *Suite de l'Affaire du Collier*). This is she whom Bette, and Bette's Advocate, intended the world to take for Gay d'Oliva. 'The other is of middle size: dark eyes, chestnut hair, white com- 'plexion: the sound of her voice is agreeable; she speaks perfectly well, and 'with no less faculty than vivacity:' this one is meant for Lamotte. Oliva's real name was Essigny; the *Oliva* (OLISVA, anagram of VALOIS) was given her by Lamotte along with the title of *Baroness* (Ms. Note, *Affaire du Collier*).

'One afternoon, in the month of July following, I was at 'the Palais-Royal: my whole company, at the moment, was 'the child I speak of. A tall young man, walking alone, passes 'several times before me. He was a man I had never seen. 'He looks at me; he looks fixedly at me. I observe even that 'always, as he comes near, he slackens his pace, as if to survey 'me more at leisure. A chair stood vacant; two or three feet 'from mine. He seats himself there.

'Till this instant, the sight of the young man, his walks, 'his approaches, his repeated gazings, had made no impression 'on me. But now when he was sitting so close by, I could not 'avoid noticing him. His eyes ceased not to wander over all 'my person. His air becomes earnest, grave. An unquiet 'curiosity appears to agitate him. He seems to measure my 'figure, to seize by turns all parts of my physiognomy.'—He finds me (but whispers not a syllable of it) tolerably like, both in person and profile; for even the Abbé Georgel says, I was a *belle courtisane.*

'It is time to name this young man: he was the Sieur de 'Lamotte, styling himself Comte de Lamotte.' Who doubts it? He praises 'my feeble charms;' expresses a wish to 'pay his 'addresses to me.' I, being a lone spinster, know not what to say; think it best in the mean while to retire. Vain precaution! 'I see him all on a sudden appear in my apartment'!

On his 'ninth visit' (for he was always civility itself), he talks of introducing a great Court-lady, by whose means I may even do her Majesty some little secret-service,—the reward of which will be unspeakable. In the dusk of the evening, silks mysteriously rustle: enter the creative Dramaturgist, Dame styled Countess de Lamotte; and so—the too intrusive scientific reader has now, for his punishment, *got* on the wrong-side of that loveliest Transparency; finds nothing but grease-pots, and vapour of expiring wicks!

The Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva may once more sit, or stand, in the Palais-Royal, with such custom as will come. In due time, she shall again, but with breath of Terror, be blown upon; and blown out of France to Brussels.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NECKLACE IS SOLD.

AUTUMN, with its gray moaning winds and coating of red strewn leaves, invites Courtiers to enjoy the charms of Nature; and all business of moment stands still. Countess de Lamotte, while everything is so stagnant, and even Boehmer has locked-up his Necklace and his hopes for the season, can drive, with her Count and Euryalus Villette, down to native Bar-sur-Aube; and there (in virtue of a Queen's bounty) show the envious a Scion-of-Royalty *re*grafted; and make them yellower looking on it. A well-varnished chariot, with the Arms of Valois duly painted in bend-sinister; a house gallantly furnished, bodies gallantly attired,—secure them the favourablest reception from all manner of men. The very Duc de Penthièvre (Egalité's father-in-law) welcomes our Lamotte, with that urbanity characteristic of his high station and the old school. Worth, indeed, makes the man, or woman; but 'leather' of gig-straps, and 'prunella' of gig-lining, first makes it *go*.

The great creative Dramaturgist has thus let down her drop-scene; and only, with a Letter or two to Saverne, or even a visit thither (for it is but a day's drive from Bar), keeps up a due modicum of intermediate instrumental music. She needs some pause, in good sooth, to collect herself a little; for the last act and grand Catastrophe is at hand. Two fixed-ideas, Cardinal's and Jeweller's, a negative and a positive, have felt each other; stimulated now by new hope, are rapidly revolving round each other, and approximating; like two flames, are stretching-out long fire-tongues to join and be one.

Boehmer, on his side, is ready with the readiest; as indeed he has been these four long years. The Countess, it is true, will have neither part nor lot in that foolish *Cadeau* of his, or in the whole foolish Necklace business: this she has, in plain words, and even not without asperity, due to a bore of such magnitude, given him to know. From her nevertheless, by cunning inference, and the merest accident in the world, the sly Joaillier-Bijoutier has gleaned thus much, that Monseigneur

de Rohan is the man.—Enough! Enough! Madame shall be no more troubled. Rest there, in hope, thou Necklace of the Devil; but, O Monseigneur, be thy return speedy!

Alas, the man lives not that would be speedier than Monseigneur, if he durst. But as yet no gilt Autograph invites him, permits him; the few gilt Autographs are all negatory, procrastinating. Cabals of Court; forever cabals! Nay if it be not for some Necklace, or other such crotchet or necessity, who knows but he may *never* be recalled (so fickle is womankind); but forgotten, and left to rot here, like his Rose, into *pot-pourri?* Our tutelary Countess, too, is shyer in this matter than we ever saw her. Nevertheless, by intense skilful cross-questioning, he has extorted somewhat; sees partly how it stands. The Queen's Majesty will have her Necklace; for when, in such case, had not woman her way? The Queen's Majesty can even pay for it—by instalments; but then the stingy husband! Once for all, she will not be seen in the business. Now, therefore, Were it, or were it not, permissible to mortal to transact it secretly in her stead? That is the question. If to mortal, then to Monseigneur. Our Countess has even ventured to hint afar off at Monseigneur (kind Countess!) in the proper quarter; but his discretion in regard to money-matters is doubted. Discretion? And I on the *Promenade de la Rose?*—Explode not, O Eminence! Trust will spring of trial; thy hour is coming.

The Lamottes meanwhile have left their farewell card with all the respectable classes of Bar-sur-Aube; our Dramaturgist stands again behind the scenes at Paris. How is it, O Monseigneur, that she is still so shy with thee, in this matter of the Necklace; that she leaves the lovelorn Latmian shepherd to droop, here in lone Saverne, like weeping-ash, in naked winter, on his Promenade of the Rose, with vague commonplace responses that his hour is coming?—By Heaven and Earth! at last, in late January, it is *come.* Behold it, this new gilt Autograph: 'To Paris, on a small business of delicacy, which our Countess will explain,'—which I already know! To Paris! Horses; postillions; beefeaters!—And so his resuscitated Eminence, all wrapt in furs, in the pleasantest frost (Abbé Georgel says, *un beau froid de Janvier*), over clear-jingling highways rolls rapidly,—borne on the bosom of Dreams.

O Dame de Lamotte, has the enchanted Diamond fruit ripened, then? Hast thou *given* it the little shake, big with unutterable fate?—I? can the Dame justly retort: Who saw me in it?——The reader, therefore, has still Three scenic Exhibitions to look at, by our great Dramaturgist; then the Fourth and last,—by another Author.

To us, reflecting how oftenest the true moving force in human things works hidden underground, it seems small marvel that this month of January 1785, wherein our Countess so little courts the eye of the vulgar historian, should nevertheless have been the busiest of all for her; especially the latter half thereof.

Wisely eschewing matters of Business (which she could never in her life understand), our Countess will personally take no charge of that bargain-making; leaves it all to her Majesty and the gilt Autographs. Assiduous Boehmer nevertheless is in frequent close conference with Monseigneur: the Paris Palais de Strasbourg, shut to the rest of men, sees the Joaillier-Bijoutier, with eager official aspect, come and go. The grand difficulty is—must we say it?—her Majesty's wilful whimsicality, unacquaintance with Business. She positively will not write a gilt Autograph, *authorising* his Eminence to make the bargain; but writes rather, in a pettish manner, that the thing is of no consequence, and can be given up! Thus must the poor Countess dash to and fro, like a weaver's shuttle, between Paris and Versailles; wear her horses and nerves to pieces; nay, sometimes in the hottest haste, wait many hours within call of the Palace, considering what *can* be done (with none but Villette to bear her company),—till the Queen's whim pass.

At length, after furious-driving and conferences enough, on the 29th of January a middle course is hit on. Cautious Boehmer shall write out, on finest paper, his terms; which are really rather fair: Sixteen hundred thousand livres; to be paid in five equal instalments; the first this day six months; the other four from three months to three months; this is what Court-Jewellers, Boehmer and Bassange, on the one part, and Prince Cardinal Commendator Louis de Rohan, on the other part, will stand to; witness their hands. Which written sheet of finest paper

our poor Countess must again take charge of, again dash-off with to Versailles; and therefrom, after trouble unspeakable (shared in only by the faithful Villette, of Rascaldom), return with it, bearing this most precious marginal note, '*Bon—Marie-Antoinette de France*,' in the Autograph-hand! Happy Cardinal! this *thou* shalt keep in the innermost of all thy repositories. Boehmer meanwhile, secret as Death, shall tell no man that he has sold his Necklace; or if much pressed for an actual sight of the same, confess that it is sold to the Favourite Sultana of the Grand Turk for the time being.[1]

Thus, then, do the smoking Lamotte horses at length get rubbed down, and feel the taste of oats, after midnight; the Lamotte Countess can also gradually sink into needful slumber, perhaps not unbroken by dreams. On the morrow the bargain shall be concluded; next day the Necklace be delivered, on Monseigneur's receipt.

Will the reader, therefore, be pleased to glance at the following two Life-Pictures, Real-Phantasmagories, or whatever we may call them: they are the two first of those Three scenic real-poetic Exhibitions, brought about by our Dramaturgist: short Exhibitions, but essential ones.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NECKLACE VANISHES.

It is the first day of February; that grand day of Delivery. The Sieur Boehmer is in the Court of the Palais de Strasbourg; his look mysterious-official, and though much emaciated, radiant with enthusiasm. The Seine has missed him; though lean, he will fatten again, and live through new enterprises.

Singular, were we not used to it: the name "Boehmer," as it passes upwards and inwards, lowers all halberts of Heyducs in perpendicular rows: the historical eye beholds him, bowing low, with plenteous smiles, in the plush Saloon of Audience. Will it please Monseigneur, then, to do the *ne-plus-*

[1] Campan.

ultra of Necklaces the honour of looking at it? A piece of Art, which the Universe cannot parallel, shall be parted with (Necessity compels Court-Jewellers) at that ruinously low sum. They, the Court-Jewellers, shall have much ado to weather it; but their work, at least, will find a fit Wearer, and go down to juster posterity. Monseigneur will merely have the condescension to sign this Receipt of Delivery: all the rest, her Highness the Sultana of the Sublime Porte has settled it.—Here the Court-Jeweller, with his joyous though now much-emaciated face, ventures on a faint knowing smile; to which, in the lofty dissolute-serene of Monseigneur's, some twinkle of permission could not but respond.—This is the First of those Three real-poetic Exhibitions, brought about by our Dramaturgist,—with perfect success.

It was said, long afterwards, that Monseigneur should have known, and even that Boehmer should have known, her Highness the Sultana's marginal-note, her '*Right—Marie-Antoinette of France*,' to be a forgery and mockery: the '*of France*' was fatal to it. Easy talking, easy criticising! But how are two enchanted men to know; two men with a fixed-idea each, a negative and a positive, rushing together to neutralise each other in rapture?—Enough, Monseigneur has the *ne-plus-ultra* of Necklaces, conquered by man's valour and woman's wit; and rolls off with it, in mysterious speed, to Versailles,—triumphant as a Jason with his Golden Fleece.

The Second grand scenic Exhibition by our Dramaturgic Countess occurs in her own apartment at Versailles, so early as the following night. It is a commodious apartment, with alcove; and the alcove has a glass door.[1] Monseigneur enters,—with a follower bearing a mysterious Casket, who carefully deposits it, and then respectfully withdraws. It is the Necklace itself in all its glory! Our tutelary Countess, and Monseigneur, and we, can at leisure admire the queenly Talisman; congratulate ourselves that the painful conquest of it is achieved.

But, hist! A knock, mild but decisive, as from one knocking with authority! Monseigneur and we retire to our alcove; there, from behind our glass screen, observe what passes. Who comes? The door flung open: *de par la Reine!* Behold him,

[1] Georgel, &c.

Monseigneur: he enters with grave, respectful, yet official air; worthy Monsieur Queen's-valet Lesclaux, the same who escorted our tutelary Countess, that moonlight night, from the back apartments of Versailles. Said we not, thou wouldst see *him* once more?—Methinks, again, spite of his Queen's-uniform, he has much the features of Villette of Rascaldom!—Rascaldom or Valetdom (for to the blind all colours are the same), he has, with his grave, respectful, yet official air, received the Casket, and its priceless contents; with fit injunction, with fit engagements; and retires bowing low.

Thus softly, silently, like a very Dream, flits away our solid Necklace—through the Horn Gate of Dreams!

CHAPTER XIII.

SCENE THIRD: BY DAME DE LAMOTTE.

Now too, in these same days (as he can afterwards prove by affidavit of Landlords) arrives Count Cagliostro himself, from Lyons! No longer by predictions in cipher; but by his living voice, often in rapt communion with the unseen world, 'with Caraffe and four candles;' by his greasy prophetic bull-dog face, said to be the 'most perfect quack-face of the eighteenth century,' can we assure ourselves that all is well; that all will turn 'to the glory of Monseigneur, to the good of France, and of mankind,'[1] and of Egyptian masonry. 'Tokay flows like water;' our charming Countess, with her piquancy of face, is sprightlier than ever; enlivens with the brightest sallies, with the adroitest flatteries to all, those suppers of the gods. O Nights, O Suppers—too good to last! Nay, now also occurs another and Third scenic Exhibition, fitted by its radiance to dispel from Monseigneur's soul the last trace of care.

Why the Queen does not, even yet, openly receive me at Court? Patience, Monseigneur! Thou little knowest those too-intricate cabals; and how she still but works at them silently, with royal suppressed fury, like a royal lioness only *delivering* herself from the hunter's toils. Meanwhile, is not

[1] Georgel, &c.

thy work done? The Necklace, she rejoices over it; beholds, many times in secret, her Juno-neck mirrored back the lovelier for it,—as our tutelar Countess can testify. Come tomorrow to the *Œil-de-Bœuf;* there see with eyes, in high noon, as already in deep midnight thou hast seen, whether in *her* royal heart there were delay.

Let us stand, then, with Monseigneur, in that *Œil-de-Bœuf*, in the Versailles Palace Gallery; for all well-dressed persons are admitted: there the Loveliest, in pomp of royalty, will walk to mass. The world is all in pelisses and winter furs; cheerful, clear,—with noses tending to blue. A lively many-voiced hum plays fitful, hither and thither: of sledge parties and Court parties; frosty state of the weather; stability of M. de Calonne; Majesty's looks yesterday;—such hum as always, in these sacred Court-spaces, since Louis le Grand made and consecrated them, has, with more or less impetuosity, agitated our common Atmosphere.

Ah, through that long high Gallery what Figures have passed —and vanished! Louvois,—with the Great King, flashing fire-glances on the fugitive; in his red right hand a pair of tongs, which pious Maintenon hardly holds back: Louvois, where art thou? Ye *Maréchaux de France?* Ye unmentionable-women of past generations? Here also was it that rolled and rushed the 'sound, absolutely like thunder,'[2] of Courtier hosts; in that dark hour when the signal-light in Louis the Fifteenth's chamber-window was blown out; and his ghastly infectious Corpse lay lone, forsaken on its tumbled death-lair, 'in the hands of some poor women;' and the Courtier hosts rushed from the Deep-fallen to hail the New-risen! These too rushed, and passed; and their 'sound, absolutely like thunder,' became silence. Figures? Men? They are fast-fleeting Shadows; fast chasing each other: it is not a Palace, but a Caravansera. —Monseigneur (with thy too-much Tokay overnight)! cease puzzling: here *thou* art, this blessed February day:—the Peerless, will she turn lightly that high head of hers, and glance aside into the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, in passing? Please Heaven, she will. To our tutelary Countess, at least, she promised it;[3] though, alas, so fickle is womankind!—

[2] Campan. [3] See Georgel.

Hark! Clang of opening doors! She issues, like the Moon in silver brightness, down the Eastern steeps. *La Reine vient!* What a figure! I (with the aid of glasses) discern *her*. O Fairest, Peerless! Let the hum of minor discoursing hush itself wholly; and only one successive rolling peal of *Vive la Reine*, like the movable radiance of a train of fire-works, irradiate her path.—Ye Immortals! She does, she beckons, turns her head this way!—"Does she not?" says Countess de Lamotte. —Versailles, the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, and all men and things are drowned in a Sea of Light; Monseigneur and that high beckoning Head are alone, with each other in the Universe.

O Eminence, what a beatific vision! Enjoy it, blest as the gods; ruminate and reënjoy it, with full soul: it is the last provided for thee. Too soon, in the course of these six months, shall thy beatific vision, like Mirza's vision, gradually melt away; and only oxen and sheep be grazing in its place;—and thou, as a doomed Nebuchadnezzar, be grazing with them.

"Does she not?" said the Countess de Lamotte. That it is a habit of hers; that hardly a day passes *without* her doing it: this the Countess de Lamotte did not say.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NECKLACE CANNOT BE PAID.

HERE, then, the specially Dramaturgic labours of Countess de Lamotte may be said to terminate. The rest of her life is Histrionic merely, or Histrionic and Critical; as, indeed, what had all the former part of it been but a *Hypocrisis*, a more or less correct Playing of Parts? O 'Mrs. Facing-both-ways' (as old Bunyan said), what a talent hadst thou! No Proteus ever took so many shapes, no Chameleon so often changed colour. One thing thou wert to Monseigneur; another thing to Cagliostro, and Villette of Rascaldom; a third thing to the World, in printed *Mémoires;* a fourth thing to Philippe Egalité: all things to all men!

Let her, however, we say, but manage now to *act* her own parts, with proper Histrionic illusion; and, by Critical glosses,

give her past Dramaturgy the fit aspect, to Monsiegneur and others: this henceforth, and not new Dramaturgy, includes her whole task. Dramatic scenes, in plenty, will follow of themselves; especially that Fourth and final Scene, spoken of above as by another Author,—by Destiny itself.

For in the Lamotte Theatre, so different from our common Pasteboard one, the Play goes on, even when the Machinist has left it. Strange enough: those Air-images, which from her Magic-lantern she hung out on the empty bosom of Night, have clutched hold of this solid-seeming World (which some call the Material World, as if that made it more a Real one), and will tumble hither and thither the solidest masses there. Yes, reader, so goes it here below. What thou callest a Brain-web, or mere illusive Nothing, *is* it not a web of the Brain; of the Spirit which inhabits the Brain; and which, in this World (rather, as I think, to be named the Spiritual one), very naturally moves and tumbles hither and thither all things it meets with, in Heaven or in Earth?—So too, the Necklace, though we saw it vanish through the Horn Gate of Dreams, and in my opinion man shall never more behold it,—yet its activity ceases not, nor will. For no Act of a man, no Thing (how much less the man himself!) is extinguished when *it* disappears: through considerable times it still visibly works, though done and vanished; I have known a done thing work visibly Three Thousand Years and more: invisibly, unrecognised, all done things work through endless times and years. Such a Hypermagical is this our poor old Real world; which some take upon them to pronounce effete, prosaic! Friend, it is thyself that art all withered up into effete Prose, dead as ashes: know this (I advise thee); and seek passionately, with a passion little short of desperation, to have it remedied.

Meanwhile, what will the feeling heart think to learn that Monseigneur de Rohan, as we prophesied, again experiences the fickleness of a Court; that, notwithstanding beatific visions at noon and midnight, the Queen's Majesty, with the light ingratitude of her sex, flies off at a tangent; and, far from ousting his detested and detesting rival, Minister Breteuil, and openly delighting to honour Monseigneur, will hardly vouchsafe him a few gilt Autographs, and those few of the most capricious, suspicious, soul-confusing tenour? What terrifico-absurd

explosions, which scarcely Cagliostro, with Caraffe and four candles, can still; how many deep-weighed Humble Petitions, Explanations, Expostulations, penned with fervidest eloquence, with craftiest diplomacy,—all delivered by our tutelar Countess: in vain!—O Cardinal, with what a huge iron mace, like Guy of Warwick's, thou smitest Phantasms in two, which close again, take shape again; and only thrashest the air!

One comfort, however, is that the Queen's Majesty has committed herself. The Rose of Trianon, and what may pertain thereto, lies it not here? That '*Right—Marie-Antoinette of France*,' too; and the 30th of July, first-instalment day, coming? She shall be *brought* to terms, good Eminence! Order horses and beef-eaters for Saverne; there, ceasing all written or oral communication, starve her into capitulating.[1] It is the bright May month: his Eminence again somnambulates the *Promenade de la Rose;* but now with grim dry eyes; and, from time to time, terrifically stamping.

But who is this that I see mounted on costliest horse and horse-gear; betting at Newmarket Races; though he can speak no English word, and only some Chevalier O'Niel, some Capuchin Macdermot, from Bar-sur-Aube, interprets his French into the Dialect of the Sister Island? Few days ago I observed him walking in Fleet-street, thoughtfully through Temple-Bar; —in deep treaty with Jeweller Jeffreys, with Jeweller Grey,[2] for the sale of Diamonds: such a lot as one may boast of. A tall handsome man; with ex-military whiskers; with a look of troubled gaiety and rascalism: you think it is the Sieur self-styled Count de Lamotte; nay the man himself confesses it! The Diamonds were a present to his Countess,—from the still-bountiful Queen.

Villette too, has he completed his sales at Amsterdam? Him I shall by and by behold; not betting at Newmarket, but drinking wine and ardent spirits in the Taverns of Geneva. Ill-gotten wealth endures not; Rascaldom has no strong-box. Countess de Lamotte, for what a set of cormorant scoundrels hast thou laboured, art thou still labouring!

[1] See Lamotte.

[2] Grey lived in No. 13 New Bond Street; Jeffreys in Piccadilly (Rohan's *Mémoire pour:* see also *Count* de Lamotte's Narrative, in the *Mémoires Justificatifs*). Rohan says, 'Jeffreys bought more than 10,000*l.* worth.'

Still labouring, we may say: for as the fatal 30th of July approaches, what is to be looked for but universal Earthquake; Mud-explosion that will blot-out the face of Nature? Methinks, stood I in thy pattens, Dame de Lamotte, I would cut and run.—"Run!" exclaims she, with a toss of indignant astonishment: "Calumniated Innocence run?" For it is singular how in some minds, which are mere bottomless 'chaotic whirlpools of gilt shreds,' there is no deliberate Lying whatever; and nothing is either believed or disbelieved, but only (with some transient suitable Histrionic emotion) spoken and heard.

Had Dame de Lamotte a certain greatness of character, then; at least, a strength of transcendent audacity, amounting to the bastard-heroic? Great, indubitably great, is her Dramaturgic and Histrionic talent; but as for the rest, one must answer, with reluctance, No. Mrs. Facing-both-ways is a 'Spark of vehement Life,' but the farthest in the world from a brave woman: she did not, in any case, show the bravery of a woman; did, in many cases, show the mere screaming trepidation of one. Her grand quality is rather to be reckoned negative: the 'untameableness' as of a fly; the 'wax-cloth dress' from which so much ran down like water. Small sparrows, as I learn, have been trained to fire cannon; but would make poor Artillery Officers in a Waterloo. Thou dost not call that Cork a strong swimmer? Which nevertheless shoots, without hurt, the Falls of Niagara; defies the thunderbolt itself to sink it, for more than a moment. Without intellect, imagination, power of attention, or any spiritual faculty, how brave were one,—with fit motive for it, such as hunger! How much might one dare, by the simplest of methods, by not thinking of it, not knowing it!—Besides, is not Cagliostro, foolish blustering Quack, still here? No scapegoat had ever broader back. The Cardinal too, has he not money? Queen's Majesty, even in effigy, shall not be insulted; the Soubises, De Marsans, and high and puissant Cousins, must huddle the matter up: Calumniated Innocence, in the most universal of Earthquakes, will find *some* crevice to whisk through, as she has so often done.

But all this while how fares it with his Eminence, left somnambulating the *Promenade de la Rose;* and at times truculently stamping? Alas, ill, and ever worse. The starving method, singular as it may seem, brings no capitulation; brings

only, after a month's waiting, our tutelary Countess, with a gilt Autograph, indeed, and 'all wrapt in silk threads, sealed where they cross,'—but which we read with curses.[3]

We must back again to Paris; there pen new Expostulations; which our unwearied Countess will take charge of, but, alas, can get no answer to. However, is not the 30th of July coming?—Behold, on the 19th of that month, the shortest, most careless of Autographs: with some fifteen hundred pounds of real money in it, to pay the—*interest* of the first instalment; the principal, of some thirty thousand, not being at the moment perfectly convenient! Hungry Boehmer makes large eyes at this proposal; will accept the money, but only as part of payment; the man is positive: a Court of Justice, if no other means, shall get him the remainder. What now is to be done?

Farmer-general Monsieur Saint-James, Cagliostro's disciple, and wet with Tokay, will cheerfully advance the sum needed —for her Majesty's sake; thinks, however (with all his Tokay), it were good to *speak* with her Majesty first.—I observe, meanwhile, the distracted hungry Boehmer driven hither and thither, not by his fixed-idea; alas, no, but by the far more frightful *ghost* thereof,—since no payment is forthcoming. He stands, one day, speaking with a Queen's waiting-woman (Madame Campan herself), in 'a thunder-shower, which neither of them notice,'—so thunderstruck are they.[4] What weather-symptoms for his Eminence!

The 30th of July has come, but no money; the 30th is gone, but no money. O Eminence, what a grim farewell of July is this of 1785! The last July went out with airs from Heaven and Trianon Roses. *These* August days, are they not worse than dogs' days; worthy to be blotted out from all Almanacs? Boehmer and Bassange thou canst still see; but only 'return from them swearing.'[5] Nay, what new misery is this? Our tutelary Histrionic Countess enters, distraction in her eyes:[6] she has just been at Versailles; the Queen's Majesty, with a levity of caprice which we dare not trust ourselves to characterise, declares plainly that she will deny ever having

[3] See Lamotte.
[4] Campan.
[5] Lamotte.
[6] Georgel.

got the Necklace; ever having had, with his Eminence, any transaction whatsoever!—Mud-explosion without parallel in volcanic annals.—The Palais de Strasbourg appears to be beset with spies; the Lamottes, for the Count too is here, are packing-up for Bar-sur-Aube. The Sieur Boehmer, has he fallen insane? Or into communication with Minister Breteuil?—

And so, distractedly and distractively, to the sound of all Discords in Nature, opens that Fourth, final Scenic Exhibition, composed by Destiny.

CHAPTER XV.

SCENE FOURTH: BY DESTINY

It is Assumption-day, the 15th of August. Don thy pontificalia, Grand-Almoner; crush-down these hideous temporalities out of sight. In any case, smooth thy countenance into some sort of lofty-dissolute serene: thou hast a thing they call worshipping God to enact, thyself the first actor.

The Grand-Almoner has done it. He is in Versailles *Œil-de-Bœuf* Gallery; where male and female Peerage, and all Noble France in gala various and glorious as the rainbow, waits only the signal to begin worshipping: on the serene of his lofty-dissolute countenance there can nothing be read.[1] By Heaven! he is sent for to the Royal Apartment!

He returns with the old lofty-dissolute look, inscrutably serene: has his turn for favour actually come, then? Those fifteen long years of soul's travail are to be rewarded by a birth? —Monsieur le Baron de Breteuil issues; great in his pride of place, in this the crowning moment of his life. With one radiant glance, Breteuil summons the Officer on Guard; with another, fixes Monseigneur: "*De par le Roi, Monseigneur:* you are arrested! At *your* risk, Officer!"—Curtains as of pitch-black whirlwind envelop Monseigneur, whirl off with him, to outer darkness. Versailles Gallery explodes aghast; as if

[1] This is Bette d'Etienville's description of him: 'A handsome man, of 'fifty; with high complexion; hair white-gray, and the front of the head 'bald: of high stature; carriage noble and easy, though burdened with a 'certain degree of corpulency; who, I never doubted, was Monsieur de Ro-'han.' (First *Mémoire pour.*)

Guy Fawkes's Plot had *burst* under it. "The Queen's Majesty was weeping," whisper some. There will be no Assumption-service; or such a one as was never celebrated since Assumption came in fashion.

Europe, then, shall ring with it from side to side!—But why rides that Heyduc as if all the Devils drove him? It is Monseigneur's Heyduc: Monseigneur spoke three words in German to him, at the door of his Versailles Hotel; even handed him a slip of writing, which, with borrowed Pencil, 'in his red square cap,' he had managed to prepare on the way thither.[2] To Paris! To the Palais-Cardinal! The horse dies on reaching the stable; the Heyduc swoons on reaching the cabinet: but his slip of writing fell from his hand; and I (says the Abbé Georgel) was there. The red Portfolio, containing all the gilt Autographs, is burnt utterly, with much else, before Breteuil can arrive for apposition of the seals!—Whereby Europe, in ringing from side to side, must worry itself with guessing: and at this hour, on this paper, sees the matter in such an interesting clear-obscure.

Soon Count Cagliostro and his Seraphic Countess go to join Monseigneur in State Prison. In few days follows Dame de Lamotte, from Bar-sur-Aube; Demoiselle d'Oliva by and by, from Brussels; Villette-de-Rétaux, from his Swiss retirement in the taverns of Geneva. The Bastille opens its iron bosom to them all.

CHAPTER LAST.

MISSA EST.

Thus, then, the Diamond Necklace having, on the one hand, vanished through the Horn Gate of Dreams, and so, under the pincers of Nisus Lamotte and Euryalus Villette, lost its sublunary individuality and being; and, on the other hand, all that trafficked in it, sitting now safe under lock and key, that justice may take cognisance of them,—our engagement in regard to the matter is on the point of terminating. That extraordinary '*Procès du Collier*, Necklace Trial,' spinning itself

[2] Georgel.

through Nine other ever-memorable Months, to the astonishment of the hundred and eighty-seven assembled *Parlementiers*, and of all Quidnuncs, Journalists, Anecdotists, Satirists, in both Hemispheres, is, in every sense, a 'Celebrated Trial,' and belongs to Publishers of such. How, by innumerable confrontations and expiscatory questions, through entanglements, doublings and windings that fatigue eye and soul, this most involute of Lies is finally winded off to the scandalous-ridiculous cinder-heart of it, let others relate.

Meanwhile, during these Nine ever-memorable Months, till they terminate late at night precisely with the May of 1786,[1] how many fugitive leaves, quizzical, imaginative, or at least mendacious, were flying about in Newspapers; or stitched together as Pamphlets; and what heaps of others were left creeping in Manuscript, we shall not say;—having, indeed, no complete Collection of them, and what is more to the purpose, little to do with such Collection. Nevertheless, searching for some fit Capital of the composite order, to adorn adequately the now finished singular Pillar of our Narrative, what can suit us better than the following, so far as we know, yet unedited,

Occasional Discourse, by Count Alessandro Cagliostro, Thaumaturgist, Prophet and Arch-Quack; delivered in the Bastille: Year of Lucifer, 5789; *of the Mahometan Hegira from Mecca*, 1201; *of the Cagliostric Hegira from Palermo*, 24; *of the Vulgar Era*, 1785.

'Fellow Scoundrels,—An unspeakable Intrigue, spun from 'the soul of that Circe-Megæra, by our voluntary or involun-'tary help, has assembled us all, if not under one roof-tree, 'yet within one grim iron-bound ring-wall. For an appointed 'number of months, in the ever-rolling flow of Time, we, being 'gathered from the four winds, did by Destiny work together 'in body corporate; and, joint labourers in a Transaction al-'ready famed over the Globe, obtain unity of Name, like the 'Argonauts of old, as *Conquerors of the Diamond Necklace*.

[1] On the 31st of May 1786 sentence was pronounced: about ten at night the Cardinal got out of the Bastille; large mobs hurrahing round him,—out of spleen to the Court. (See Georgel.)

'Erelong it is done (for ring-walls hold not captive the free 'Scoundrel forever); and we disperse again, over wide terres-'trial Space; some of us, it may be, over the very marches of 'Space. Our Act hangs indissoluble together; floats wondrous 'in the older and older memory of men: while *we* the little 'band of Scoundrels, who saw each other, now hover so far 'asunder, to see each other no more, if not once more only on 'the universal Doomsday, the Last of the Days!

'In such interesting moments, while we stand within the 'verge of parting, and have not yet parted, methinks it were 'well here, in these sequestered Spaces, to institute a few gen-'eral reflections. Me, as a public speaker, the Spirit of Ma-'sonry, of Philosophy and Philanthropy, and even of Prophecy, 'blowing mysterious from the Land of Dreams, impels to do 'it. Give ear, O Fellow Scoundrels, to what the Spirit utters; 'treasure it in your hearts, practise it in your lives.

'Sitting here, penned-up in this which, with a slight meta-'phor, I call the Central Cloaca of Nature, where a tyrannical 'De Launay can forbid the bodily eye free vision, you with the 'mental eye see but the better. This Central Cloaca, is it not 'rather a Heart, into which, from all regions, mysterious con-'duits introduce and forcibly inject whatsoever is choicest in 'the Scoundrelism of the Earth; there to be absorbed, or again '(by the other auricle) ejected into new circulation? Let the 'eye of the mind run along this immeasurable venous-arterial 'system; and astound itself with the magnificent extent of 'Scoundreldom; the deep, I may say unfathomable, signifi-'cance of Scoundrelism.

'Yes, brethren, wide as the Sun's range is our Empire; 'wider than old Rome's in its palmiest era. I have in my time 'been far; in frozen Muscovy, in hot Calabria, east, west, 'wheresoever the sky overarches civilised man: and never 'hitherto saw I myself an alien; out of Scoundreldom I never 'was. Is it not even said, from of old, by the opposite party: '"*All* men are liars"? Do they not (and this nowise "in 'haste") whimperingly talk of "one just person" (as they call 'him), and of the remaining thousand save one that take part 'with us? So decided is our majority.'—(Applause.)

'Of the Scarlet Woman,—yes, Monseigneur, without of-'fence,—of the Scarlet Woman that sits on Seven Hills, and

'her Black Jesuit Militia, out foraging from Pole to Pole, I 'speak not; for the story is too trite: nay, the Militia itself, 'as I see, begins to be disbanded, and invalided, for a second 'treachery; treachery to herself! Nor yet of Governments; 'for a like reason. Ambassadors, said an English punster, *lie* 'abroad for their masters. Their masters, we answer, lie at 'home for themselves. Not of all this, nor of Courtship with 'its Lovers'-vows, nor Courtiership, nor Attorneyism, nor Pub-'lic Oratory and Selling by Auction, do I speak: I simply ask 'the gainsayer, Which is the particular trade, profession, mys-'tery, calling, or pursuit of the Sons of Adam that they suc-'cessfully manage in the other way? He cannot answer!— 'No: Philosophy itself, both practical and even speculative, 'has at length, after shamefulest groping, stumbled on the plain 'conclusion that Sham is indispensable to Reality, as Lying 'to Living; that without Lying the whole business of the world, 'from swaying of senates to selling of tapes, must explode into 'anarchic discords, and so a speedy conclusion ensue.

'But the grand problem, Fellow Scoundrels, as you well 'know, is the *marrying* of Truth and Sham; so that they be-'come one flesh, man and wife, and generate these three: 'Profit, Pudding, and Respectability that always keeps her 'Gig. Wondrously, indeed, do Truth and Delusion play into 'one another; Reality rests on Dream. Truth is but the *skin* 'of the bottomless Untrue: and ever, from time to time, the 'Untrue *sheds* it; is clear again; and the superannuated True 'itself becomes a Fable. Thus do all hostile things crumble 'back into our Empire; and of its increase there is no end.

'O brothers, to think of the Speech without meaning (which 'is mostly ours), and of the Speech with contrary meaning '(which is wholly ours), manufactured by the organs of Man-'kind in one solar day! Or call it a day of Jubilee, when 'public Dinners are given, and Dinner-orations are delivered: 'or say, a Neighbouring Island in time of General Election! 'O ye immortal gods! The mind is lost; can only admire 'great Nature's plenteousness with a kind of sacred wonder.

'For tell me, What is the chief end of man? "To glorify 'God," said the old Christian Sect, now happily extinct. "To 'eat and find eatables by the readiest method," answers sound 'Philosophy, discarding whims. If the method *readier* than

'this of persuasive-attraction is yet discovered,—point it out! '—Brethren, I said the old Christian Sect was happily extinct: 'as, indeed, in Rome itself, there goes the wonderfulest tradi- 'tionary Prophecy,[2] of that Nazareth Christ coming back, and 'being crucified a second time *there;* which truly I see not in 'the least how he could fail to be. Nevertheless, that old 'Christian whim, of an actual living and ruling God, and some 'sacred covenant binding all men in Him, with much other 'mystic stuff, does, under new or old shape, linger with a few. 'From these few keep yourselves forever far! They must even 'be left to their whim, which is not like to prove infectious.

'But neither are we, my Fellow Scoundrels, without our 'Religion, our Worship; which, like the oldest, and all true 'Worships, is one of Fear. The Christians have their Cross, 'the Moslem their Crescent: but have not we too our—Gal- 'lows? Yes, *infinitely* terrible is the Gallows; it bestrides with 'its patibulary fork the Pit of bottomless Terror! No Mani- 'cheans are we; our God is One. Great, exceeding great, 'I say, is the Gallows; of old, even from the beginning, in 'this world; knowing neither variableness nor decadence; for- 'ever, forever, over the wreck of ages, and all civic and eccle- 'siastic convulsions, meal-mobs, revolutions, the Gallows with 'front serenely terrible towers aloft. Fellow Scoundrels, fear 'the Gallows, and have no other fear! *This* is the Law and 'the Prophets. Fear every emanation of the Gallows. And 'what is every buffet, with the fist, or even with the tongue, of 'one having authority, but some such emanation? And what 'is Force of Public Opinion but the infinitude of such emana- 'tions,—rushing combined on you, like a mighty storm-wind? 'Fear the Gallows, I say! O when, with its long black arm, '*it* has clutched a man, what avail him all terrestrial things? 'These pass away, with horrid nameless dinning in his ears; 'and the ill-starred Scoundrel pendulates between Heaven and 'Earth, a thing rejected of *both.*'—(Profound sensation.)

'Such, so wide in compass, high, gallows-high in dignity, 'is the Scoundrel Empire; and for depth, it is deeper than 'the Foundations of the World. For what was Creation itself 'wholly, according to the best Philosophers, but a Divulsion

[2] Goethe mentions it (*Italiänische Reise*).

'by the TIME-SPIRIT (or Devil so-called); a forceful Interrup-
'tion, or breaking asunder, of the old Quiescence of Eternity?
'It was Lucifer that fell, and made this lordly World arise.
'Deep? It is bottomless-deep; the very Thought, diving, bobs
'up from it baffled. Is not this that they call Vice of Lying
'the *Adam-Kadmon*, or primeval Rude-Element, old as Chaos
'mother's-womb of Death and Hell; whereon their thin film
'of Virtue, Truth, and the like, poorly wavers—for a day? All
'Virtue, what is it, even by their own showing, but Vice trans-
'formed,—that is, manufactured, rendered artificial? "Man's
'Vices are the roots from which his Virtues grow out and see
'the light," says one: "Yes," add I, "and thanklessly steal
'their nourishment!" Were it not for the nine hundred ninety
'and nine unacknowledged, perhaps martyred and calumniated
'Scoundrels, how were their single Just Person (with a mur-
'rain on him!) so much as possible?—O, it is high, high:
'these things are too great for me; Intellect, Imagination,
'flags her tired wings; the soul lost, baffled'—

—Here Dame de Lamotte tittered audibly, and muttered *Coq-d'Inde*, which, being interpreted into the Scottish tongue, signifies *Bubbly-Jock!* The Arch-Quack, whose eyes were turned inwards as in rapt contemplation, started at the titter and mutter: his eyes flashed outwards with dilated pupil; his nostrils opened wide; his very hair seemed to stir in its long twisted pigtails (his fashion of curl); and as Indignation is said to make Poetry, it here made Prophecy, or what sounded as such. With terrible, working features, and gesticulation not recommended in any Book of Gesture, the Arch-Quack, in voice supernally discordant, like Lions worrying Bulls of Bashan, began:

'Sniff not, Dame de Lamotte; tremble, thou foul Circe-
'Megæra; thy day of desolation is at hand! Behold ye the
'Sanhedrim of Judges, with their fanners of written Parchment,
'loud-rustling, as they winnow all her chaff and down-plumage,
'and she stands there naked and mean?—Villette, Oliva, do
'*ye* blab secrets? Ye have no pity of her extreme need; she
'none of yours. Is thy light-giggling, untamable heart at last
'heavy? Hark ye! Shrieks of one cast out; whom they
'brand on both shoulders with iron stamp; the red-hot "V,"
'thou *Voleuse*, hath it entered thy soul? Weep, Circe de La-

'motte; wail there in truckle-bed, and hysterically gnash thy 'teeth: nay do, smother thyself in thy door-mat coverlid; thou 'hast found thy mates; thou art in the Salpêtrière!—Weep, 'daughter of the high and puissant Sans-inexpressibles! Buzz 'of Parisian Gossipry is about thee; but not to help thee: no, 'to eat before thy time. What shall a King's Court do with 'thee, thou unclean thing, while thou yet livest? Escape! 'Flee to utmost countries; hide there, if thou canst, thy mark 'of Cain!—In the Babylon of Fog-land! Ha! is that my 'London? See I Judas Iscariot Egalité? Print, yea print 'abundantly the abominations of your two hearts: breath of 'rattlesnakes can bedim the steel mirror, but only for a time. '—And there! Ay, there at last! Tumblest thou from the 'lofty leads, poverty-stricken, O thriftless daughter of the high 'and puissant, escaping bailiffs? Descendest thou precipitate, 'in dead night, from window in the third story; hurled forth 'by Bacchanals, to whom thy shrill tongue had grown unbear-'able?[3] Yea, through the smoke of that new Babylon thou 'fallest headlong; one long scream of screams makes night 'hideous: thou liest there, shattered like addle egg, "nigh to 'the Temple of Flora!" O Lamotte, has thy *Hypocrisia* ended, 'then? Thy many characters were all acted. Here at last 'thou actest not, but art what thou seemest: a mangled squelch 'of gore, confusion and abomination; which men huddle under-'ground, with no burial-stone. Thou gallows-carrion!'—

—Here the Prophet turned up his nose (the broadest of the eighteenth century), and opened wide his nostrils with such a greatness of disgust, that all the audience, even Lamotte herself, sympathetically imitated him.—'O Dame de Lamotte! 'Dame de Lamotte! Now, when the circle of thy existence 'lies complete; and my eye glances over these two score and 'three years that were lent thee, to do evil as thou couldst; 'and I beheld thee a bright-eyed little Tatterdemalion, begging 'and gathering sticks in the Bois de Boulogne; and also at 'length a squelched Putrefaction, here on London pavements;

[3] The English Translator of Lamotte's *Life* says, she fell from the leads of her house, nigh the Temple of Flora, endeavouring to escape seizure for debt; and was taken up so much hurt that she died in consequence. Another report runs, that she was flung out of window, as in the Cagliostric text. One way or other, she did die on the 23d of August 1791 (*Biographie Universelle*, xxx. 287). Where the 'Temple of Flora' was, or is, one knows not.

'with the headdressings and hungerings, the gaddings and 'hysterical gigglings that came between,—*what* shall I say 'was the meaning of thee at all?—

'Villette-de-Rétaux! Have the catchpoles trepanned thee, 'by sham of battle, in thy Tavern, from the sacred Republican 'soil?[4] It is thou that wert the hired Forger of Handwritings? 'Thou wilt confess it? Depart, unwhipt yet accursed.—Ha! 'The dread Symbol of our Faith? Swings aloft, on the Castle 'of St. Angelo, a Pendulous Mass, which I think I discern to 'be the body of Villette! There let him end; the sweet mor- 'sel of our Juggernaut.

'Nay, weep not thou, disconsolate Oliva; blear not thy 'bright blue eyes, daughter of the shady Garden! Thee shall 'the Sanhedrim not harm: this Cloaca of Nature emits thee; 'as notablest of unfortunate-females, thou shalt have choice of 'husbands not without capital; and accept one.[5] Know this; 'for the vision of it is true.

'But the Anointed Majesty whom ye profaned?' Blow, 'spirit of Egyptian Masonry, blow aside the thick curtains of 'Space! Lo you, her eyes are red with their first tears of pure 'bitterness; not with their last. Tirewoman Campan is choos- 'ing, from the Print-shops of the Quais, the reputed-best among 'the hundred likenesses of Circe de Lamotte:[6] a Queen shall 'consider if the basest of women ever, by any accident, dark- 'ened daylight or candle-light for the highest. The Portrait 'answers: Never!'—(Sensation in the audience.)

[4] See Georgel, and Villette's *Mémoire*.

[5] In the *Affaire du Collier* is this Ms. Note: 'Gay d'Oliva, a common- 'girl of the Palais-Royal, who was chosen to play a part in this Business, got 'married, some years afterwards, to one Beausire, an Ex-Noble, formerly 'attached to the D'Artois Household. In 1790 he was Captain of the Na- 'tional Guard Company of the Temple. He then retired to Choisy, and 'managed to be named Procureur of that Commune: he finally employed 'himself in drawing-up Lists of Proscription in the Luxembourg Prison, 'when he played the part of informer (*mouton*). See *Tableau des Prisons* '*de Paris sous Robespierre*.' These details are correct. In the *Mémoires sur les Prisons* (new Title of the Book just referred to), ii. 171, we find this: 'The 'second Denouncer was Beausire, an Ex-Noble, known under the old go- 'vernment for his intrigues. To give an idea of him, it is enough to say that 'he married the D'Oliva,' &c., as in the Ms. Note already given. Finally is added: 'He was the main spy of Boyenval; who, however, said that he 'made use of him; but that Fouquier-Tinville did not like him, and would 'have him guillotined in good time.'

[6] See Campan.

'—Ha! What is *this?* Angels, Uriel, Anachiel, and ye 'other five; Pentagon of Rejuvenescence; Power that destroy- 'edest Original Sin; Earth, Heaven, and thou Outer Limbo 'which men name Hell! Does the EMPIRE OF IMPOSTURE 'waver? Burst there, in starry sheen, updarting, Light-rays 'from out *its* dark foundations; as it rocks and heaves, not in 'travail-throes, but in death-throes? Yea, Light-rays, pierc- 'ing, clear, that salute the Heavens,—lo, they *kindle* it; their 'starry clearness becomes as red Hell-fire! IMPOSTURE is in 'flames, Imposture is burnt up: one Red-sea of Fire, wild-bil- 'lowing enwraps the World; with its fire-tongue licks at the 'very Stars. Thrones are hurled into it, and Dubois Mitres, 'and Prebendal Stalls that drop fatness, and—ha! what see 'I?—all the *Gigs* of Creation: all, all! Woe is me! Never 'since Pharaoh's Chariots, in the Red-sea of water, was there 'wreck of Wheel-vehicles like this in the sea of Fire. Deso- 'late, as ashes, as gases, shall they wander in the wind.

'Higher, higher yet flames the Fire-Sea; crackling with 'new dislocated timber; hissing with leather and prunella. 'The metal Images are molten; the marble Images become 'mortar-lime; the stone Mountains sullkily explode. RESPECT- 'ABILITY, with all her collected Gigs inflamed for funeral pyre, 'wailing, leaves the Earth: not to return save under new Ava- 'tar. Imposture, how it burns, through generations: how it 'is burnt up—for a time. The World is black ashes; which, 'ah, when will they grow green? The Images all run into 'amorphous Corinthian brass; all Dwellings of men destroyed; 'the very mountains peeled and riven, the valleys black and 'dead: it is an empty World! Woe to them that shall be 'born then!——A King, a Queen (ah me!) were hurled in; 'did rustle once; flew aloft, crackling, like paper-scroll. Oliva's 'Husband was hurled in; Iscariot Egalité; thou grim De 'Launay, with thy grim Bastille; whole kindreds and peoples; 'five millions of mutually destroying Men. For it is the End 'of the Dominion of IMPOSTURE (which is Darkness and opaque 'Firedamp); and the burning-up, with unquenchable fire, of 'all the Gigs that are in the Earth!'—Here the Prophet paused, fetching a deep sigh; and the Cardinal uttered a kind of faint, tremulous Hem!

'Mourn not, O Monseigneur, spite of thy nephritic colic and

'many infirmities. For thee mercifully it was not unto death.[7] 'O Monseigneur (for thou hadst a touch of goodness), who 'would not weep over thee, if he also laughed? Behold! The 'not too judicious Historian, that long years hence, amid re- 'motest wildernesses, writes thy Life, and names thee *Mud-vol- 'cano;* even he shall reflect that it *was* thy Life this same; thy '*only* chance through whole Eternity; which thou (poor gam- 'bler) hast expended *so:* and, even over his hard heart, a breath 'of dewy pity for thee shall blow.—O Monseigneur, thou wert 'not all ignoble: thy Mud-volcano was but strength dislocated, 'fire misapplied. Thou wentest ravening through the world; 'no Life-elixir or Stone of the Wise could *we* two (for want of 'funds) discover: a foulest Circe undertook to fatten thee; 'and thou hadst to fill thy belly with the east wind. And burst? 'By the Masonry of Enoch, No! Behold, has not thy Jesuit 'Familiar his Scouts dim-flying over the deep of human things? 'Cleared art thou of crime, save that of fixed-idea; weepest, a 'repentant exile, in the Mountains of Auvergne. Neither shall 'the Red Fire-sea itself consume thee; only consume thy Gig, 'and, instead of Gig (O rich exchange!), restore thy Self. Safe 'beyond the Rhine-stream, thou livest peaceful days; savest 'many from the fire, and anointest their smarting burns. Sleep 'finally, in thy mother's bosom, in a good old age!'—The Car- dinal gave a sort of guttural murmur, or gurgle, which ended in a long sigh.

'O Horrors, as ye shall be called,' again burst forth the Quack, 'why have ye missed the Sieur de Lamotte; why not 'of him, too, made gallows-carrion? Will spear, or sword- 'stick, thrust at him (or supposed to be thrust), through win- 'dow of hackney-coach, in Piccadilly of the Babylon of Fog, 'where he jolts disconsolate, not let out the imprisoned animal 'existence? Is he poisoned, too?[8] Poison will not kill the 'Sieur Lamotte; nor steel, nor massacres.[9] Let him drag his

[7] Rohan was elected of the Constituent Assembly; and even got a compliment or two in it, as Court-victim, from here and there a man of weak judgment. He was one of the first who, recalcitrating against 'Civil Constitution of the Clergy' &c., took himself across the Rhine.

[8] See Lamotte's Narrative (*Mémoires Justificatifs*).

[9] Lamotte, after his wife's death, had returned to Paris; and been arrested,—*not* for building churches. The Sentence of the old Parlement against him, in regard to the Necklace Business, he gets annulled by the new

'utterly superfluous life to a second and a third generation; 'and even admit the not too judicious Historian to see his face 'before he die.

'But, ha!' cried he, and stood wide-staring, horror-struck, as if some Cribb's fist had knocked the wind out of him: 'O 'horror of horrors! Is it not Myself I see? Roman Inquisi- 'tion! Long months of cruel baiting! *Life of Giuseppe Bal- 'samo!* Cagliostro's Body still lying in St. Leo Castle, his '*Self* fled—*whither?* Bystanders wag their heads, and say: '"The Brow of Brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; 'these Pinchbeck lips can lie no more!" Eheu! Ohoo!'—And he burst into unstanchable blubbering of tears; and sobbing out the moanfulest broken howl, sank down in swoon; to be put to bed by De Launay and others.

Thus spoke (or thus might have spoken), and prophesied, the Arch-Quack Cagliostro: and truly much better than he ever else did: for not a jot or tittle of it (save only that of our promised Interview with Nestor de Lamotte, which looks unlikelier than ever, for we have not heard of him, dead or living, since 1826)—but has turned out to be literally *true*. As indeed, in all this History, one jot or tittle of untruth, that we could render true, is perhaps not discoverable; much as the distrustful reader may have disbelieved.

Courts; but is nevertheless 'retained in confinement' (*Moniteur* Newspaper, 7th August 1792). He was still in Prison at the time the September Massacre broke out. From Maton de la Varenne we cite the following grim passage: Maton is in La Force Prison.

'At one in the morning' (of Monday, 3 Sept. 1792), writes Maton, 'the 'grate that led to our quarter was again opened. Four men in uniform, 'holding each a naked sabre and blazing torch, mounted to our corridor; a 'turnkey showing the way; and entered a room close on ours, to investigate 'a box, which they broke open. This done, they halted in the gallery; and 'began interrogating one Cuissa, to know where Lamotte was; who, they 'said, under pretext of finding a treasure, which they should share in, had 'swindled one of them out of 300 livres, having asked him to dinner for that 'purpose. The wretched Cuissa, whom they had in their power, and who 'lost his life that night, answered, all trembling, that he remembered the 'fact well, but could not say what had become of the prisoner. Resolute to 'find this Lamotte and confront him with Cuissa, they ascended into other 'rooms, and made farther rummaging there; but apparently without effect, 'for I heard them say to one another: "Come, search among the corpses, 'then; for, *nom de Dieu!* we must know what is become of him."' (*Ma Résurrection*, par Maton de la Varenne; reprinted in the *Histoire Parlementaire*, xviii. 142.)—Lamotte lay in the Bicêtre Prison; but had got out, precisely in the nick of time,—and dived beyond soundings.

Here, then, our little labour ends. The Necklace was, and is no more: the stones of it again 'circulate in Commerce,' some of them perhaps in Rundle's at this hour; and may give rise to what other Histories we know not. The Conquerors of it, every one that trafficked in it, have they not all had their due, which was Death?

This little Business, like a little cloud, bodied itself forth in skies clear to the unobservant: but with such hues of deep-tinted villany, dissoluteness and general delirium as, to the observant, betokened it electric; and wise men, a Goethe for example, boded Earthquakes. Has not the Earthquake come?

MIRABEAU.[1]

[1837.]

A PROVERB says, 'The house that is a-building looks not as the house that is built.' Environed with rubbish and mortar-heaps, with scaffold-poles, hodmen, dust-clouds, some rudiments only of the thing that is to be, can, to the most observant, disclose themselves through the mean tumult of the thing that hitherto is. How true is this same with regard to all works and facts whatsoever in our world; emphatically true in regard to the highest fact and work which our world witnesses,—the Life of what we call an Original Man. Such a man is one not made altogether by the common pattern; one whose phases and goings-forth cannot be prophesied of, even approximately; though, indeed, by their very newness and strangeness they most of all provoke prophecy. A man of this kind, while he lives on earth, is 'unfolding himself out of nothing into something,' surely under very complex conditions: he is drawing continually towards him, in continual succession and variation, the materials of his structure, nay his very plan of it, from the whole realm of Accident, you may say, and from the whole realm of Freewill: he is *building* his life together in this manner; a guess and a problem as yet, not to others only but to himself. Hence such criticism by the bystanders; loud no-knowledge, loud mis-knowledge! It is like the opening of the Fisherman's Casket in the Arabian Tale, this beginning and growing-up of a life: vague smoke wavering hither and thither; some features of a Genie looming through; of the ultimate shape of which no fisherman or man can judge. And yet, as we say, men do judge, and pass pro-

[1] LONDON AND WESTMINSTER REVIEW, No. 8.—*Mémoires biographiques, littéraires et politiques de Mirabeau; écrits par lui-même, par son Père, son Oncle et son Fils Adoptif* (Memoirs, biographical, literary and political, of Mirabeau; written by himself, by his Father, his Uncle and his Adopted Son). 8 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1834-36.

visional sentence, being forced to it; you can predict with what accuracy! 'Look at the audience in a theatre,' says one: 'the life of a man is there compressed within five-hours dura-'tion; is transacted on an open stage, with lighted lamps, and 'what the fittest words and art of genius can do to make the 'spirit of it clear; yet listen, when the curtain falls, what a dis-'cerning public will say of that!' And now, if the drama extended over threescore and ten years; and were enacted, not with a view to clearness, but rather indeed with a view to concealment, often in the deepest attainable involution of obscurity; and your discerning public, occupied otherwise, cast its eye on the business now here for a moment, and then there for a moment? Woe to him, answer we, who has no court of appeal against the world's judgment! He is a doomed man: doomed by conviction to hard penalties; nay purchasing acquittal (too probably) by a still harder penalty, that of being a triviality, superficiality, self-advertiser, and partial or total quack, which is the hardest penalty of all.

But suppose farther, that the man, as we said, was an original man; that his life-drama would not and could not be measured by the three unities alone, but partly by a rule of its own too: still farther, that the transactions he had mingled in were great and world-dividing; that of all his judges there were not one who had not something to love him for unduly, to hate him for unduly! Alas, is it not precisely in this case, where the whole world is promptest to judge, that the whole world is likeliest to be wrong; natural opacity being so doubly and trebly darkened by accidental difficulty and perversion? The crabbed moralist had some show of reason who said: To judge of an original contemporary man, you must, in general, reverse the world's judgment about him; the world is not only wrong on that matter, but cannot on any such matter be right.

One comfort is, that the world is ever working itself righter and righter on such matters; that a continual revisal and rectification of the world's first judgment on them is inevitably going on. For, after all, the world loves its original men, and can in nowise forget them; not till after a long while; sometimes not till after thousands of years. Forgetting *them*, what, indeed, should it remember? The world's wealth is its original men; by these and their works it is a world and not a waste:

the memory and record of what MEN it bore—this is the sum of its strength, its sacred 'property forever,' whereby it upholds itself, and steers forward, better or worse, through the yet undiscovered deep of Time. All knowledge, all art, all beautiful or precious possession of existence, is, in the longrun, this, or connected with this. Science itself, is it not under one of its most interesting aspects, Biography; is it not the Record of the *Work* which an original man, still named by us, or not now named, was blessed by the heavens to do? That Sphere-and-cylinder is the monument and abbreviated history of the man Archimedes; not to be forgotten, probably, till the world itself vanish. Of Poets, and what they have done, and how the world loves them, let us, in these days, very singular in respect of that Art, say nothing, or next to nothing. The greatest modern of the poetic guild has already said: 'Nay, if thou 'wilt have it, who but the poet first formed gods for us, brought 'them down to us, raised us up to them?'

Another remark, on a lower scale, not unworthy of notice, is by Jean Paul: that 'as in art, so in conduct, or what we 'call morals, before there can be an Aristotle with his critical 'canons, there must be a Homer, many Homers with their 'heroic performances.' In plainer words, the original man is the true creator (or call him revealer) of Morals too: it is from his example that precepts enough are derived, and written down in books and systems: he properly is the *thing;* all that follows after is but talk about the thing, better or worse interpretation of it, more or less wearisome and ineffectual discourse of logic on it. A remark this of Jean Paul's which, well meditated, may seem one of the most pregnant lately written on these matters. If any man had the ambition of building a new system of morals (not a promising enterprise, at this time of day), there is no remark known to us which might better serve him as a chief corner-stone, whereon to found, and to build, high enough, nothing doubting;—high, for instance, as the Christian Gospel itself. And to whatever other heights man's destiny may yet carry him! Consider whether it was not, from the first, by example, or say rather by human exemplars, and such reverent imitation or abhorrent aversion and avoidance as these gave rise to, that man's duties were made indubitable to him? Also, if it is not yet, in these last days, by very much

the same means (example, precept, prohibition, 'force of public opinion,' and other forcings and inducings), that the like result is brought about; and, from the Woolsack down to the Treadmill, from Almack's to Chalk Farm and the west-end of Newgate, the incongruous whirlpool of life is forced and induced to whirl with some attempt at regularity? The two Mosaic Tables were of simple limited stone; no logic appended to them: we, in our days, are privileged with Logic, —Systems of Morals, Professors of Moral Philosophy, Theories of Moral Sentiment, Utilities, Sympathies, Moral Senses not a few; useful for those that feel comfort in them. But to the observant eye, is it not still plain that the rule of man's life rests not very steadily on logic (rather carries logic unsteadily resting on *it*, as an excuse, an exposition, or ornamental solacement to oneself and others); that ever, as of old, the thing a man will do is the thing he feels commanded to do: of which command, again, the origin and reasonableness remains often as good as *in*demonstrable by logic; and, indeed, lies mainly in this, That it has been demonstrated otherwise and better; by experiment, namely; that an experimental (what we name original) man has already done it, and we have *seen* it to be good and reasonable, and now know it to be so once and forevermore?—Enough of this.

He were a sanguine individual surely that should turn to the French Revolution for new rules of conduct, and creators or exemplars of morality,—except, indeed, exemplars of the gibbeted *in-terrorem* sort. A greater work, it is often said, was never done in the world's history by men so small. Twenty-five millions (say these severe critics) are hurled forth out of all their old habitudes, arrangements, harnessings and garnitures, into the new, quite void arena and career of *Sansculottism;* there to show what originality is in them. Fanfaronading and gesticulation, vehemence, effervescence, heroic desperation, they do show in abundance; but of what one can call originality, invention, natural stuff or character, amazingly little. Their heroic desperation, such as it was, we will honour and even venerate, as a new document (call it rather a renewal of that primeval ineffaceable document and charter) of the manhood of man. But, for the rest, there were Federations; there were Festivals of Fraternity, 'the Statue of Na-

ture pouring water from her two *mammelles*,' and the august Deputies all drinking of it from the same iron saucer; Weights and Measures were attempted to be changed; the Months of the Year became Pluviose, Thermidor, Messidor (till Napoleon said, *Il faudra se débarrasser de ce Messidor*, One must get this Messidor sent about its business): also Mrs. Momoro and others rode prosperous, as Goddesses of Reason; and then, these being mostly guillotined, Mahomet Robespierre did, with bouquet in hand, and in new black breeches, in front of the Tuileries, pronounce the scraggiest of prophetic discourses on the *Être Suprême*, and set fire to much emblematic pasteboard:—all this, and an immensity of such, the Twenty-five millions did devise and accomplish; but (apart from their heroic desperation, which was no miracle either, beside that of the old Dutch, for instance) this, and the like of this, was almost all. Their arena of *Sansculottism* was the most original arena opened to man for above a thousand years; and they, at bottom, were unexpectedly commonplace in it.

Exaggerated commonplace, triviality run distracted, and a kind of universal 'Frenzy of John Dennis,' is the figure they exhibit. The brave Forster,—sinking slowly of broken heart, in the midst of that volcanic chaos of the Reign of Terror, and clinging still to the cause, which, though now bloody and terrible, he believed to be the highest, and for which he had sacrificed all, country, kindred, fortune, friends and life,—compares the Revolution, indeed, to 'an explosion and new creation of the world;' but the actors in it, who went buzzing about him, to a '*handvoll mücken*, handful of flies.'[2] And yet, one may add, this same explosion of a world was their work; the work of these—flies? The truth is, neither Forster nor any man can see a French Revolution; it is like seeing the ocean: poor Charles Lamb complained that he could not see the multitudinous ocean at all, but only some insignificant fraction of it from the deck of the Margate hoy. It must be owned, however (urge these severe critics), that examples of rabid triviality do abound in the French Revolution, to a lamentable extent. Consider Maximilien Robespierre; for the greater part of two years, what one may call Autocrat of France. A poor sea-green (*verdâtre*) atrabiliar Formula of a man; without head,

[2] Forster's *Briefe und Nachlass*.

without heart, or any grace, gift, or even vice beyond common, if it were not vanity, astucity, diseased rigour (which some count strength) as of a cramp: really a most poor sea-green individual in spectacles; meant by Nature for a Methodist parson of the stricter sort, to doom men who departed from the written confession; to chop fruitless shrill logic; to contend, and suspect, and ineffectually wrestle and wriggle; and, on the whole, to love, or to know, or to be (properly speaking) Nothing:—this was he who, the sport of wracking winds, saw himself whirled aloft to command *la première nation de l'univers*, and all men shouting long life to him: one of the most lamentable, tragic, sea-green objects ever whirled aloft in that manner, in any country, to his own swift destruction, and the world's long wonder!

So argue these severe critics of the French Revolution: with whom we argue not here; but remark rather, what is more to the purpose, that the French Revolution did disclose original men: among the twenty-five millions, at least one or two units. Some reckon, in the present stage of the business, as many as three: Napoleon, Danton, Mirabeau. Whether more will come to light, or of what sort, when the computation is quite liquidated, one cannot say: meanwhile let the world be thankful for these three;—as, indeed, the world is; loving original men, without limit, were they never so questionable, well knowing how rare they are! To us, accordingly, it is rather interesting to observe how on these three also, questionable as they surely are, the old process is repeating itself; how these also are getting known in their true likeness. A second generation, relieved in some measure from the spectral hallucinations, hysterical ophthalmia and natural panic-delirium of the first contemporary one, is gradually coming to discern and measure what its predecessor could only execrate and shriek over: for, as our Proverb said, the dust is sinking, the rubbish-heaps disappear; the built house, such as it is, and was appointed to be, stands visible, better or worse.

Of Napoleon Bonaparte, what with so many bulletins, and such self-proclamation from artillery and battle-thunder, loud enough to ring through the deafest brain, in the remotest nook of this earth, and now, in consequence, with so many biographies, histories and historical arguments for and against, it may

be said that *he* can now shift for himself; that his true figure is in a fair way of being ascertained. Doubtless it will be found one day what significance was in him; how (we quote from a New-England Book) 'the man was a divine missionary, though 'unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, 'that great doctrine, "*La carrière ouverte aux talens*, The tools 'to him that can handle them," which is our ultimate Poli-'tical Evangel, wherein alone can Liberty lie. Madly enough 'he preached, it is true, as enthusiasts and first missionaries 'are wont; with imperfect utterance, amid much frothy rant; 'yet as articulately perhaps as the case admitted. Or call him, 'if you will, an American backwoodsman, who had to fell un-'penetrated forests, and battle with innumerable wolves, and 'did not entirely forbear strong liquor, rioting and even theft; 'whom, nevertheless, the peaceful sower will follow, and, as he 'cuts the boundless harvest, bless.'—From 'the incarnate Mo-loch,' which the word once was, onwards to this quiet version, there is a considerable progress.

Still more interesting is it, not without a touch almost of pathos, to see how the rugged *Terræ Filius* Danton begins like-wise to emerge, from amid the blood-tinted obscurations and shadows of horrid cruelty, into calm light; and seems now not an Anthropophagus, but partly a man. On the whole, the Earth feels it to be something to have a 'Son of Earth;' *any* reality, rather than a hypocrisy and formula! With a man that went honestly to work with himself, and said and acted, in any sense, with the whole mind of him, there is always something to be done. Satan himself, according to Dante, was a praiseworthy object, compared with those *juste-milieu* angels (so over-numer-ous in times like ours) who 'were *neither* faithful nor rebellious,' but were for their little selves only: trimmers, moderates, plau-sible persons, who, in the Dantean Hell, are found doomed to this frightful penalty, that 'they have not the hope to die (*non han speranza di morte*);' but sunk in torpid death-life, in mud and the plague of flies, they are to doze and dree forever,—'hateful to God and to the Enemies of God:'

'*Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa!*'

If Bonaparte were the 'armed Soldier of Democracy,' in-vincible while he continued true to that, then let us call this

Danton the *Enfant Perdu*, and *un*enlisted Revolter and Titan of Democracy, which could not yet have soldiers or discipline, but was by the nature of it lawless. An Earth-born, we say, yet honestly born of Earth! In the *Memoirs of Garat*, and elsewhere, one sees these fire-eyes beam with earnest insight, fill with the water of tears; the broad rude features speak withal of wild human sympathies; that Antæus' bosom also held a heart. "It is not the alarm-cannon that you hear," cries he to the terror-struck, when the Prussians were already at Verdun: "it is the *pas de charge* against our enemies." "*De l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*, To dare, and again to dare, and without limit to dare!"—there is nothing left but that. Poor 'Mirabeau of the Sansculottes,' what a mission! And it could not be but done,—and it was done!

But, indeed, may there not be, if well considered, more virtue in this feeling itself, once bursting earnest from the wild heart, than in whole lives of immaculate Pharisees and Respectabilities, with their eye ever set on 'character,' and the letter of the law: "*Que mon nom soit flétri*, Let my name be blighted, then; let the Cause be glorious, and have victory!" By and by, as we predict, the Friend of Humanity, since so many Knife-grinders have no story to tell him, will find some sort of story in this Danton. A rough-hewn giant of a man, not anthropophagous entirely; whose 'figures of speech,' and also of action, 'are all gigantic;' whose 'voice reverberates from the domes,' and dashes Brunswick across the marches in a very wrecked condition. Always his total freedom from cant is one thing; even in his briberies, and sins as to money, there is a frankness, a kind of broad greatness. Sincerity, a great rude sincerity of insight and of purpose, dwelt in the man, which quality is the root of all: a man who could see through many things, and would stop at very few things; who marched and fought impetuously forward, in the questionablest element; and now bears the penalty, in a name 'blighted,' yet, as we say, visibly clearing itself. Once cleared, why should not this name too have significance for men? The wild history is a tragedy, as all human histories are. Brawny Dantons, still to the present hour, rend the glebe, as simple brawny Farmers, and reap peaceable harvests, at Arcis-sur-Aube; and *this* Danton—! It is an *un*rhymed tragedy; very bloody, fuliginous (after the man-

ner of the *elder* dramatists); yet full of tragic elements; not undeserving natural pity and fear. In quiet times, perhaps still at a great distance, the happier onlooker may stretch out the hand, across dim centuries, to him, and say: "Ill-starred brother, how thou foughtest with wild lion-strength, and yet not with strength *enough*, and flamedst aloft, and wert trodden down of sin and misery;—behold, thou also wert a man!" It is said there lies a Biography of Danton written, in Paris, at this moment: but the editor waits till the 'force of public opinion' ebb a little. Let him publish, with utmost convenient despatch, and say what he knows, if he do know it: the lives of remarkable men are always worth understanding instead of misunderstanding; and public opinion must positively adjust itself the best way it can.

But without doubt the far most interesting, best-gifted of this questionable trio is not the Mirabeau of the Sansculottes, but the Mirabeau himself: a man of much finer nature than either of the others; of a genius equal in strength, we will say, to Napoleon's; but a much humaner genius, almost a poetic one. With wider sympathies of his own, he appeals far more persuasively to the sympathies of men.

Of him too it is interesting to notice the progressive dawning, out of calumny, misrepresentation and confused darkness, into visibility and light; and how the world manifests its continued curiosity about him; and as book after book comes forth with new evidence, the matter is again taken up, the old judgment on it revised and anew revised; whereby, in fine, we can hope the right, or approximately right, sentence will be found; and so the question be left settled. It would seem this Mirabeau also is one whose memory the world will not, for a long while, let die. Very different from many a high memory, dead and deep-buried long since then! In his lifetime, even in the final effulgent part of it, this Mirabeau took upon him to write, with a sort of awe-struck feeling, to our Mr. Wilberforce; and did not, that we can find, get the benefit of any answer. Pitt was prime minister, and then Fox, then again Pitt, and again Fox, in sweet vicissitude; and the noise of them, reverberating through Brookes's and the club-rooms, through tavern-dinners, electioneering hustings, leading-articles, filled all the earth; and it seemed as if those two (though which might be *which*,

you could not say) were the Ormuzd and Ahriman of political Nature;—and now!

Such difference is there, once more, between an original man, of never such questionable sort, and the most dexterous, cunningly-devised parliamentary mill. The difference is great; and one of those on which the future time makes largest contrast with the present. Nothing can be more important than the mill while it continues and grinds; important, above all, to those who have sacks about the hopper. But the grinding once done, how can the memory of it endure? It is important now to no individual, not even to the individual with a sack. So that, this tumult well over, the memory of the original man, and of what small revelation he, as Son of Nature and brotherman, could make, does naturally rise on us: his memorable sayings, actings and sufferings, the very vices and crimes he fell into, are a kind of pabulum which all mortals claim their right to.

Concerning *Peuchet*, *Chaussard*, *Gassicourt*, and, indeed, all the former Biographers of Mirabeau, there can little be said here, except that they abound with errors: the present ultimate *Fils Adoptif* has never done picking faults with them. Not as memorials of Mirabeau, but as memorials of the world's relation to him, of the world's treatment of him, they may, a little longer, have some perceptible significance. From poor Peuchet (he was known in the *Moniteur* once), and other the like labourers in the vineyard, you can justly demand thus much; and not justly much more.

Etienne Dumont's *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau* might not, at first sight, seem an advance towards true knowledge, but a movement the other way, and yet it was really an advance. The book, for one thing, was hailed by a universal choral blast from all manner of reviews and periodical literatures that Europe, in all its spellable dialects, had: whereby, at least, the minds of men were again drawn to the subject; and so, amid whatever hallucination, ancient or new-devised, some increase of insight was unavoidable. Besides, the book itself did somewhat. Numerous specialties about the great Frenchman, as read by the eyes of the little Genevese, were conveyed there; and could be deciphered, making allowances. Dumont is faithful, veridical; within his own limits he has even a certain free-

dom, a picturesqueness and light clearness. It is true, the whim he had of looking at the great Mirabeau as a thing set in motion mainly by him (M. Dumont) and such as he, was one of the most wonderful to be met with in psychology. Nay, more wonderful still, how the reviewers, pretty generally, some from whom better was expected, took up the same with aggravations; and it seemed settled on all sides, that here again a pretender had been stripped, and the great made as little as the rest of us (much to our comfort); that, in fact, figuratively speaking, this enormous Mirabeau, the sound of whom went forth to all lands, was no other than an enormous trumpet, or coach-horn, of japanned tin, through which a dexterous little M. Dumont was blowing all the while, and making the noise! Some men and reviewers have strange theories of man. Let any son of Adam, the shallowest now living, try honestly to scheme out, within his head, an existence of this kind; and say how verisimilar it looks! A life and business actually conducted on such coach-horn principle,—we say not the life and business of a statesman and world-leader, but say of the poorest laceman and tape-seller,—were one of the chief miracles hitherto on record. O, M. Dumont! But thus too, when old Sir Christopher struck down the last stone in the Dome of St. Paul's, was it he that carried up the stone? No; it was a certain strong-backed man, never mentioned (covered with envious or unenvious oblivion),—probably of the Sister Island.

Let us add, however, more plainly, that M. Dumont was less to blame here than his reviewers were. The good Dumont accurately records what ingenious journey-work and fetching-and-carrying he did for his Mirabeau; interspersing many an anecdote, which the world is very glad of; extenuating nothing, we do hope, nor exaggerating anything: this is what he did, and had a clear right and call to do. And what if it failed, not altogether, yet in some measure if it did fail, to strike him, that he still properly was but a Dumont? Nay, that the gift this Mirabeau had of enlisting such respectable Dumonts to do hodwork and even skilful handiwork for him; and of ruling them and bidding them by the look of his eye; and of making them cheerfully fetch-and-carry for him, and serve him as loyal subjects, with a kind of chivalry and willingness,—that this gift was precisely the kinghood of the man, and did itself stamp

him as a leader among men! Let no man blame M. Dumont (as some have too harshly done); his error is of oversight, and venial; his worth to us is indisputable. On the other hand, let all men blame such public instructors and periodical individuals as drew that inference and life-theory for him, and brayed it forth in that loud manner; or rather, on the whole, do not blame, but pardon, and pass by on the other side. Such things are an ordained trial of public patience, which perhaps is the better for discipline; and seldom, or rather never, do any lasting injury.

Close following on Dumont's *Reminiscences* came this Biography by M. Lucas Montigny, 'Adopted Son;' the first volume in 1834, the rest at short intervals; and lies complete now in Eight considerable Volumes octavo: concerning which we are now to speak,—unhappily, in the disparaging sense. In fact it is impossible for any man to say unmixed good of M. Lucas's work. That he, as Adopted Son, has lent himself so resolutely to the washing of his hero white, and even to the white-washing of him where the natural colour was black, be this no blame to him; or even, if you will, be it praise. If a man's Adopted Son may not write the best book he can for him, then who may? But the fatal circumstance is, that M. Lucas Montigny has not written a book at all; but has merely clipped and cut-out, and cast together the materials for a book, which other men are still wanted to write. On the whole, M. Montigny rather surprises one. For the reader probably knows, what all the world whispers to itself, that when 'Mirabeau, in 1783, adopted this infant born the year before,' he had the best of all conceivable obligations to adopt him; having, by his own act (*non*-notarial), summoned him to appear in this World. And now consider both what Shakspeare's Edmund, what Poet Savage, and suchlike, have bragged; and also that the Mirabeaus, from time immemorial, had (like a certain British kindred known to us) 'produced many a blackguard, but not one blockhead'! We almost discredit that statement, which all the world whispers to itself; or, if crediting it, pause over the ruins of families. The Haarlem canal is not flatter than M. Montigny's genius. He wants the talent which seems born with all Frenchmen, that of presenting what knowledge he has in the most knowable form. One of the solidest men, too:

doubtless a valuable man ; whom it were so pleasant for us to praise, if we could. May he be happy in a private station, and never write more ;—except for the Bureaux de Préfecture, with tolerably handsome official appointments, which is far better !

His biographical work is a monstrous quarry, or mound of shot-rubbish, in eight strata, hiding valuable matter, which he that seeks will find. Valuable, we say ; for the Adopted Son having access, nay welcome and friendly entreaty, to family papers, to all manner of archives, secret records ; and working therein long years, with a filial unweariedness, has made himself piously at home in all corners of the matter. He might, with the same spirit (as we always upbraidingly think), so easily have made us at home too ! But no . he brings to light things new and old ; now precious illustrative private documents, now the poorest public heaps of mere pamphleteer and parliamentary matter, so attainable elsewhere, often so omissible were it not to be attained ; and jumbles and tumbles the whole together with such reckless clumsiness, with such endless copiousness (having wagons enough), as gives the reader many a pang. The very pains bestowed on it are often perverse ; the whole is become so hard, heavy ; unworkable, except in the sweat of one's brow ! Or call it a mine,—artificial-natural silver mine. Threads of beautiful silver ore lie scattered, which you must dig for, and sift : suddenly, when your thread or vein is at the richest, it vanishes (as is the way with mines) in thick masses of agglomerate and pudding-stone, no man can guess whither. This is not as it should be ; and yet unfortunately it could be no other. The long bad book is so much easier to do than the brief good one ; and a poor bookseller has no way of measuring and paying but by the ell, cubic or superficial. The very weaver comes and says, not "I have woven so many ells of stuff," but "so many ells of *such* stuff :" satin and Cashmere-shawl stuff,—or, if it be so, duffle and coal-sacking, and even cobweb stuff.

Undoubtedly the Adopted Son's will was good. Ought we not to rejoice greatly in the possession of these same silver-veins ; and take them in the buried mineral state, or in any state ; too thankful to have them now indestructible, now that they are printed ? Let the world, we say, be thankful to M. Montigny, and yet know what it is they are thanking him for.

No *Life of Mirabeau* is to be found in these Volumes, but the amplest materials for writing a *Life*. Were the Eight Volumes well riddled and smelted down into One Volume, such as might be made, that one were the volume! Nay it seems an enterprise of such uses, and withal so feasible, that some day it is as good as sure to be done, and again done, and finally well done.

The present reviewer, restricted to a mere article, purposes, nevertheless, to sift and extract somewhat. He has bored (so to speak) and run mine-shafts through the book in various directions, and knows pretty well what is in it, though indeed not so well where to find the same, having unfortunately (as reviewers are wont) 'mislaid our paper of references'! Wherefore, if the best extracts be not presented, let not M. Lucas suffer. By one means and another, some sketch of Mirabeau's history; what befell him successively in this World, and what steps he successively took in consequence; and how he and it, working together, made the thing we call Mirabeau's Life, —may be brought out; extremely imperfect, yet truer, one can hope, than the Biographical Dictionaries and ordinary voice of rumour give it. Whether, and if so, where and how, the current estimate of Mirabeau is to be rectified, fortified, or in any important point overset and expunged, will hereby come to light, almost of itself, as we proceed. Indeed, it is very singular, considering the emphatic judgments daily uttered, in print and speech, about this man, what Egyptian obscurity rests over the mere facts of his external history; the right knowledge of which, one would fancy, must be the preliminary of any judgment, however faint. But thus, as we always urge, are such judgments generally passed: vague *plebiscita*, decrees of the common people; made up of innumerable loud empty ayes and loud empty noes; which are without meaning, and have only sound and currency: *plebiscita* needing so much revisal! —To the work, however.

One of the most valuable elements in these Eight chaotic Volumes of M. Montigny is the knowledge he communicates of Mirabeau's father; of his kindred and family, contemporary and anterior. The father, we in general knew, was Victor Riquetti, Marquis de Mirabeau, called and calling himself the *Friend of Men;* a title, for the rest, which bodes him no good in these

days of ours. Accordingly one heard it added with little surprise, that this Friend of Men was the enemy of almost every man he had to do with; beginning at his own hearth, ending at the utmost circle of his acquaintance; and only beyond that, feeling himself free to love men. "The old hypocrite!" cry many,—not we. Alas, it is so much easier to love men while they exist only on paper, or quite flexible and compliant in your imagination, than to love Jack and Kit who stand there in the body, hungry, untoward; jostling you, barring you, with angular elbows, with appetites, irascibilities and a stupid will of their own! There is no doubt but old Marquis Mirabeau found it extremely difficult to get on with his brethren of mankind; and proved a crabbed, sulphurous, choleric old gentleman many a sad time: nevertheless, there is much to be set right in that matter; and M. Lucas, if one can carefully follow him, has managed to do it. Had M. Lucas but seen good to print these private letters, family documents, and more of them (for he 'could make thirty octavo volumes'), in a separate state; in mere chronological order, with some small commentary of annotation; and to leave all the rest alone!—As it is, one must search and sift. Happily the old Marquis himself, in periods of leisure, or forced leisure, whereof he had many, drew up certain 'unpublished memoirs' of his father and progenitors; out of which memoirs young Mirabeau also in forced leisure (still more forced, in the Castle of If!) redacted one Memoir, of a very readable sort: by the light of this latter, so far as it will last, we walk with convenience.

The Mirabeaus were Riquettis by surname, which is a slight corruption of the Italian *Arrighetti*. They came from Florence: cast out of it in some Guelph-Ghibelline quarrel, such as were common there and then, in the year 1267. Stormy times then, as now! The chronologist can remark that Dante Alighieri was a little boy, of some two years, that morning the Arrighettis had to go, and men had to say, "They are gone, these villains! They are gone, these martyrs!" the little boy listening with interest. Let the boy become a man, and he too shall have to go; and prove *come è duro calle*, and what a world this is; and have his poet-nature not killed, for it would not kill, but darkened into Old-Hebrew sternness, and sent onwards to Hades and Eternity for a home to itself. As Dame Quickly said in the

Dream—"Those were rare times, Mr. Rigmarole!"—"Pretty much like our own," answered he.—In this manner did the Arrighettis (doubtless in grim Longobardic ire) scale the Alps; and become Tramontane French Riquettis; and produce,—among other things, the present Article in this Review.

It was hinted above that these Riquettis were a notable kindred; as indeed there is great likelihood, if we knew it rightly, the kindred and fathers of most notable men are. The Vaucluse fountain, that gushes out as a river, may well have run some space underground in that character, before it found vent. Nay perhaps it is not always, or often, the intrinsically greatest of a family-line that becomes the noted one, but only the best-favoured of fortune. So rich here, as elsewhere, is Nature, the mighty Mother; and scatters from a single Oak-tree, as provender for pigs, what would plant the whole Planet into an oak-forest! For truly, if there were not a *mute* force in her, where were she with the speaking and exhibiting one? If under that frothy superficies of baggarts, babblers and high-sounding, richly-decorated personages, that strut and fret, and preach in all times *Quam parvâ sapientiâ regatur*, there lay not some substratum of silently heroic men; working as men; with man's energy, enduring and endeavouring; invincible, who whisper not even to themselves how energetic they are?

The Riquetti family was, in some measure, defined already by analogy to that British one; as a family totally exempt from blockheads, but a little liable to produce blackguards. It took root in Provence, and bore strong southern fruit there: a restless, stormy line of men; with the wild blood running in them, and as if there had been a doom hung over them ('like the line of Atreus,' Mirabeau used to say); which really there was, the wild blood itself being doom enough. How long they had stormed in Florence and elsewhere, these Riquettis, history knows not; but for the space of those five centuries, in Provence, they were never without a man to stand Riquetti-like on the earth. Men sharp of speech, prompt of stroke; men quick to discern, fierce to resolve; headlong, headstrong, strong every way; who often found the civic race-course too strait for them, and kicked against the pricks; doing this thing or the other, which the world had to animadvert upon, in various dialects, and find 'clean against rule.'

One Riquetti (in performance of some vow at sea, as the tradition goes) chained two mountains together: 'the iron 'chain is still to be seen at Moustier;—it stretches from one 'mountain to the other, and in the middle of it there is a large 'star with five rays;' the supposed date is 1390. Fancy the smiths at work on *this* business! The town of Moustier is in the Basses-Alpes of Provence: whether the Riquetti chain creaks there to this hour, and lazily swags in the winds, with its 'star of five rays' in the centre, and offers an uncertain perch to the sparrow, we know not. Or perhaps it was cut down in the Revolution time, when there rose such a hatred of noblesse, such a famine for iron; and made into pikes? The Adopted Son, so minute generally, ought to have mentioned, but does not.—That there was building of hospitals, endowing of convents, Chartreux, Récollets, down even to Jesuits; still more, that there was harrying and fighting, needs not be mentioned: except only that all this went on with uncommon emphasis among the Riquettis. What quarrel could there be and a Riquetti not in it? They fought much: with an eye to profit, to redress of disprofit; probably too for the art's sake.

What proved still more rational, they got footing in Marseilles as trading nobles (a kind of French Venice in those days), and took with great diligence to commerce. The family biographers are careful to say that it was in the Venetian style, however, and not ignoble. In which sense, indeed, one of their sharp-spoken ancestors, on a certain bishop's unceremoniously styling him 'Jean de Riquetti, Merchant of Marseilles,' made ready answer: "I am, or was, merchant of police here" (first consul, an office for nobles only), "as my Lord Bishop is merchant of holy-water:" let his Reverence take that. At all events, the ready-spoken proved first-rate traders; acquired their *bastide*, or mansion (white, on one of those green hills behind Marseilles), endless warehouses: acquired the lands first of this, then of that; the lands, Village, and Castle of Mirabeau on the banks of the Durance; respectable Castle of Mirabeau, 'standing on its scarped rock, in the gorge of two valleys, swept by the north wind,'—very brown and melancholy-looking now! What is extremely advantageous, the old Marquis says, they had a singular talent for choosing wives; and always chose discreet valiant women; whereby the lineage was

the better kept up. One grandmother, whom the Marquis himself might all but remember, was wont to say, alluding to the degeneracy of the age: "You are men? You are but manikins "(*sias houmachomes*, in Provençal); we women in our time "carried pistols in our girdles, and could use them too." Or fancy the Dame Mirabeau sailing stately towards the church-font; another dame striking-in to take precedence of her; the Dame Mirabeau despatching this latter with a box on the ear (*soufflet*), and these words: "Here, as in the army, the baggage goes last!" Thus did the Riquettis grow, and were strong; and did exploits in their narrow arena, waiting for a wider one.

When it came to courtiership, and your field of preferment was the Versailles Œil-de-Bœuf, and a Grand Monarque walking encircled with scarlet women and adulators there, the course of the Mirabeaus grew still more complicated. They had the career of arms open, better or worse: but that was not the only one, not the main one; gold apples seemed to rain on other careers,—on that career lead bullets mostly. Observe how a Bruno, Count de Mirabeau, comports himself:—like a rhinoceros yoked in carriage-gear; his fierce forest-horn set to dangle a plume of *fleurs-de-lis*. 'One day he had chased a 'blue man (it is a sort of troublesome usher at Versailles) into 'the very cabinet of the King, who thereupon ordered the Duke 'de la Feuillade to put Mirabeau under arrest. Mirabeau re-'fused to obey; he "would not be punished for chastising the 'insolence of a valet; for the rest, would go to the *dîner du roi* '(king's dinner), who might then give his order himself." He 'came accordingly; the King asked the Duke why he had not 'executed the order? The Duke was obliged to say how it 'stood; the King, with a goodness equal to his greatness, 'then said, "It is not of today that we know him to be mad; 'one must not ruin him," '—and the rhinoceros Bruno journeyed on.

But again, on the day when they were 'inaugurating the 'pedestrian statue of King Louis in the Place des Victoires '(a masterpiece of adulation),' the same Mirabeau, 'passing 'along the Pont Neuf with the Guards, raised his spontoon 'to his shoulder before Henry the Fourth's statue, and saluting 'first, bawled out, "Friends, we will salute this one; he de-'serves it as well as some, *Mes amis, saluons celui-ci; il en*

'*vaut bien un autre*." '—Thus do they, the wild Riquettis, in a state of courtiership. Not otherwise, according to the proverb, do wild bulls, unexpectedly finding themselves in crockery-shops. O Riquetti kindred, into what centuries and circumstances art thou come down!

Directly prior to our old Marquis himself, the Riquetti kindred had as near as possible gone out. Jean Antoine, afterwards named Silverstock (*Col d'Argent*), had, in the earlier part of his life, been what he used to call *killed*,—of seven-and-twenty wounds in one hour. Haughtier, juster, more choleric man need not be sought for in biography. He flung gabellemen and excisemen into the river Durance (though otherwise a most dignified methodic man), when their claims were not clear; he ejected, by the like brief process, all manner of attorneys from his villages and properties; he planted vineyards, solaced peasants. He rode through France repeatedly (as the old men still remembered), with the gallantest train of outriders, on return from the wars; intimidating innkeepers and all the world, into mute prostration, into unerring promptitude, by the mere light of his eye;—withal drinking rather deep, yet never seen affected by it. He was a tall, straight man (of six feet and upwards), in mind as in body: Vendôme's 'right arm' in all campaigns. Vendôme once presented him to Louis the Great, with compliments to that effect, which the splenetic Riquetti quite spoiled. Erecting his *killed* head, which needed the silver stock now to keep it straight, he said: "Yes, Sire; "and had I left my fighting, and come up to court, and bribed "some *catin* (scarlet woman!), I might have had my promo- "tion and fewer wounds today!" The Grand King, every inch a king, instantaneously spoke of something else.

But the reader should have first seen that same killing; how twenty-seven of those unprofitable wounds were come by in one fell lot. The *Battle of Casano* has grown very obscure to most of us; and indeed Prince Eugene and Vendôme themselves grow dimmer and dimmer, as men and battles must: but, curiously enough, this small fraction of it has brightened up again to a point of history, for the time being:

'My grandfather had foreseen that manœuvre' (it is Mirabeau, the Count, not the Marquis, that reports: Prince Eugene has carried a certain bridge which the grandfather had charge of); 'but he did not, as

has since happened at Malplaquet and Fontenoy, commit the blunder of attacking right in the teeth a column of such weight as that. He lets them advance, hurried-on by their own impetuosity and by the pressure of their rearward; and now seeing them pretty well engaged, he raised his troop (it was lying flat on the ground), and rushing on, himself at the head of them, takes the enemy in flank, cuts them in two, dashes them back, chases them over the bridge again, which they had to repass in great disorder and haste. Things brought to their old state, he resumes his post on the crown of the bridge, shelters his troop as before, which, having performed all this service under the sure deadly fire of the enemy's double lines from over the stream, had suffered a good deal. M. de Vendôme coming up, full gallop, to the attack, finds it already finished, the whole line flat on the earth, only the tall figure of the colonel standing erect! He orders him to do like the rest, not to have himself shot till the time came. His faithful servant cries to him, "Never would I expose myself without need; I am bound to be here, but you, Monseigneur, are bound not. I answer to you for the post; but take yourself out of it, or I give it up." The Prince (Vendôme) then orders him, in the king's name, to come down. "Go to, the king and you: I am at my work; go you and do yours." The good generous Prince yielded. The post was entirely untenable.

'A little afterwards my grandfather had his right arm shattered. He formed a sort of sling for it of his pocket-handkerchief, and kept his place; for there was a new attack getting ready. The right moment once come, he seizes an axe in his left hand, repeats the same manœuvre as before; again repulses the enemy, again drives him back over the bridge. But it was here that ill-fortune lay in wait for him. At the very moment while he was recalling and ranging his troop, a bullet struck him in the throat; cut asunder the tendons, the jugular vein. He sank on the bridge; the troop broke and fled. M. de Montolieu, Knight of Malta, his relative, was wounded beside him: he tore-up his own shirt, and those of several others, to stanch the blood, but fainted himself by his own hurt. An old sergeant, named Laprairie, begged the aide-major of the regiment, one Guadin, a Gascon, to help and carry him off the bridge. Guadin refused, saying he was dead. The good Laprairie could only cast a camp-kettle over his colonel's head, and then run. The enemy trampled over him in torrents to profit by the disorder; the cavalry at full speed, close in the rear of the foot. M. de Vendôme, seeing his line broken, the enemy forming on this side the stream, and consequently the bridge lost, exclaimed, "Ah! Mirabeau *is dead*, then;" a eulogy forever dear and memorable to us.'

How nearly, at this moment, it was all over with the Mirabeaus; how, but for the cast of an insignificant camp-kettle, there had not only been no Article *Mirabeau* in this Review,

but no French Revolution, or a very different one; and all Europe had found itself in far other latitudes at this hour, any one who has a turn for such things may easily reflect. Nay, without great difficulty he may reflect farther, that not only the French Revolution and this Article, but all revolutions, articles and achievements whatsoever, the greatest and the smallest, which this world ever beheld, have not once, but often, in their course of genesis, depended on the veriest trifles, castings of camp-kettles, turnings of straws; except only that we do not *see* that course of theirs. So inscrutable is genetic history; impracticable the theory of causation, and transcends all calculus of man's devising! Thou thyself, O Reader (who art an achievement of importance), over what hairsbreadth bridges of Accident, through yawning perils, and the man-devouring gulf of Centuries, hast thou got safe hither,—from Adam all the way!

Be this as it can, *Col d'Argent* came alive again, by 'miracle of surgery;' and, holding his head up by means of a silver stock, walked this earth many long days, with respectability, with fiery intrepidity and spleen; did many notable things: among others, produced, in dignified wedlock, Mirabeau the Friend of Men; who again produced Mirabeau the Swallower of Formulas; from which latter, and the wondrous blazing funeral-pyre he made for himself, there finally goes forth a light, whereby those old Riquetti destinies, and many a strange old hidden thing, become noticeable.

But perhaps in the whole Riquetti kindred there is not a stranger figure than this very Friend of Men; at whom, in the order of time, we have now arrived. That Riquetti who chained the mountains together, and hung up the star with five rays to sway and bob there, was but a type of him. Strong, tough as the oak-root, and as gnarled and unwedgeable; no fibre of him running straight with the other; a block for Destiny to beat on, for the world to gaze at, with ineffectual wonder! Really a most notable, questionable, hateable, lovable old Marquis. How little, amid such jingling triviality of Literature, *Philosophie* and the pretentious cackle of innumerable Baron Grimms, with their correspondence and self-proclamation, one could fancy that France held in it such a Nature-product as the Friend of Men! Why, there is substance enough in this one Marquis

to fit-out whole armies of *Philosophes*, were it properly attenuated. So many poor Thomases perorate and have *éloges*, poor Morellets speculate, Marmontels moralise in rose-pink manner, Diderots become possessed of encyclopedical heads, and lean Carons de Beaumarchais fly abroad on the wings of *Figaros;* and this brave old Marquis has been hid under a bushel! He was a Writer, too; and had talents for it (certain of the talents), such as few Frenchmen have had since the days of Montaigne. It skilled not: he, being unwedgeable, has remained in antiquarian cabinets; the others, splitting-up so readily, are the ware you find on all market-stalls, much prized (say as brimstone Lucifers, '*light*-bringers' so-called) by the generality. Such is the world's way. And yet complain not; this rich, unwedgeable old Marquis, have we not him too at last, and can keep him all the longer than the Thomases?

The great Mirabeau used to say always that his father had the greater gifts of the two; which surely is saying something. Not that you can subscribe to it in the full sense, but that in a very wide sense you can. So far as mere speculative head goes, Mirabeau is probably right. Looking at the old Marquis as a speculative thinker and utterer of his thought, and with what rich colouring of originality he gives it forth, you pronounce him to be superior, or even say supreme in his time; for the genius of him almost rises to the poetic. Do our readers know the German Jean Paul, and his style of thought? Singular to say, the old Marquis has a quality in him resembling afar off that of Paul; and actually works it out in his French manner, far as the French manner can. Nevertheless intellect is not of the speculative head only; the great end of intellect surely is, that it make one *see* something: for which latter result the whole man must coöperate. In the old Marquis there dwells withal a crabbedness, stiff cross-grained humour, a latent fury and fuliginosity, very perverting; which stiff crabbedness, with its pride, obstinacy, affectation, what else is it at bottom but *want* of strength? The real quantity of our insight,—how justly and thoroughly we shall comprehend the nature of a thing, especially of a human thing,—depends on our patience, our fairness, lovingness, what strength soever we have: intellect comes from the whole man, as it is the light that enlightens the whole man. In this true sense, the younger Mirabeau, with that

great flashing eyesight of his, that broad, fearless freedom of nature he had, was very clearly the superior man.

At bottom, perhaps, the main definition you could give of old Marquis Mirabeau is, that he was of the Pedant species. Stiff as brass, in all senses ; unsympathising, uncomplying ; of an endless, unfathomable pride, which cloaks but does nowise extinguish an endless vanity and need of shining : stately, cuphuistic mannerism enveloping the thought, the morality, the whole being of the man. A solemn, high-stalking man ; with such a fund of indignation in him, or of latent indignation ; of contumacity, irrefragability ;—who (after long experiment) accordingly looks forth on mankind and this world of theirs with some dull-snuffling word of forgiveness, of contemptuous acquittal ; or oftenest with clenched lips (nostrils slightly dilated), in expressive silence. Here is pedantry ; but then pedantry under the most interesting new circumstances ; and withal carried to such a pitch as becomes sublime, one might almost say transcendental.

Consider, indeed, whether Marquis Mirabeau could be a pedant, as your common Scaligers and Scioppiuses are ! His arena is not a closet with Greek manuscripts, but the wide world and Friendship to Humanity. Does not the blood of all the Mirabeaus circulate in his honourable veins ? He too would do somewhat to raise higher that high house ; and yet, alas, it is plain to him that the house is sinking ; that much is sinking. The Mirabeaus, and above all others this Mirabeau, are fallen on evil times. It has not escaped the old Marquis how Nobility is now decayed, nearly ruinous ; based no longer on heroic nobleness of conduct and effort, but on sycophancy, formality, adroitness ; on Parchments, Tailor's Trimmings, Prunella and Coach-leather : on which latter basis, unless his whole insight into Heaven's ways with Earth have misled him, no institution in this god-governed world can pretend to continue. Alas, and the priest has now no tongue but for plate-licking ; and the tax-gatherer squeezes ; and the strumpetocracy sits at its ease in high-cushioned lordliness, under baldachins and cloth-of-gold : till now at last, what with one fiction, what with another (and veridical Nature dishonouring all manner of fictions, and refusing to pay realities for them), it has come so far that the Twenty-five millions, long scarce of knowledge, of

virtue, happiness, cash, are now fallen scarce of food to eat; and do not, with that natural ferocity of theirs which Nature has still left them, feel the disposition to die starved; and all things are nodding towards chaos, and no man layeth it to heart! One man exists who might perhaps stay or avert the catastrophe, were he called to the helm: the Marquis Mirabeau. His high ancient blood, his heroic love of truth, his strength of heart, his loyalty and profound insight (for you cannot hear him speak without detecting the man of genius), this, with the appalling predicament things have come to, might give him claims. From time to time, at long intervals, such a thought does flit, portentous, through the brain of the Marquis. But ah! in these scandalous days, how shall the proudest of the Mirabeaus fall prostrate before a Pompadour? Can the Friend of Men hoist, with good hope, as his battle-standard, the furbelow of an unmentionable woman? No; not hanging by the apron-strings of such a one will this Mirabeau rise to the premiership; but summoned by France in her day of need, in her day of vision, or else not at all. France does not summon; the *else* goes its road.

Marquis Mirabeau tried Literature too, as we said; and with no inconsiderable talent; nay, with first-rate talents in some sort: but neither did this prosper. His *Ecce signum*, in such era of downfall and all-darkening ruin, was Political Economy; and a certain man, whom he called 'the Master,'—that is, Dr. Quesnay. Round this Master (whom the Marquis succeeded as Master himself) he and some other idolaters did idolatrously gather: to publish books and tracts, periodical literature, proclamation by word and deed,—if so were, the world's dull ear might be opened to salvation. The world's dull ear continued shut. In vain preached this apostle and that other, simultaneously or in Melibœan sequence, in literature, periodical and stationary; in vain preached Marquis Mirabeau in his *Ami des Hommes*, number after number, through long volumes,—though really in a most eloquent manner. Marquis Mirabeau had the indisputablest ideas; but then his style! In very truth, it is the strangest of styles, though one of the richest: a style full of originality, picturesqueness, sunny vigour; but all cased and slated over, threefold, in metaphor and trope; distracted into tortuosities, dislocations; starting-out into crot-

chets, cramp turns, quaintnesses, and hidden satire ; which the French head had no ear for. Strong meat, too tough for babes ! The Friend of Men found warm partisans, widely scattered over this Earth ; and had censer-fumes transmitted him from marquises, nay from kings and principalities, over seas and alpine chains of mountains ; whereby the pride and latent indignation of the man were only fostered : but at home, with the million all jigging each after its suitable scrannel-pipe, he could see himself make no way,—if it were not way towards being a monstrosity, and thing men wanted 'to see :' not the right thing !

Neither through the press, then, is there progress towards the premiership ? The staggering state of French statesmen must even stagger whither it is bound. A light Public froths itself into tempest about Palissot and his comedy of *Les Philosophes*, —about Gluck-Piccini Music ; neglecting the call of Ruin ; and hard must come to hard. Thou, O Friend of Men, clench thy lips together, and wait ; silent as the old rocks. Our Friend of Men did so, or better ; not wanting to himself, the lion-hearted old Marquis ! For his latent indignation has a certain devoutness in it ; is a kind of holy indignation. The Marquis, though he knows the *Encyclopédie*, has not forgotten the higher Sacred Books, or that there is a God in this world, —very different from the French *Être Suprême*. He even professes, or tries to profess, a kind of diluted Catholicism, in his own way, and thus turn an eye towards heaven : very singular in his attitude here too. Thus it would appear this world is a mad imbroglio, which no Friend of Men can set right : it shall go wrong, then, in God's name ; and the staggering state of all things stagger whither it can. To deep, fearful depths,— not to bottomless ones !

But in the Family Circle ? There surely a man, and friend of men, is supreme ; and, ruling with wise autocracy, may make something of it. Alas, in the family circle it went not better, but worse ! The Mirabeaus had once a talent for choosing wives : had it deserted them in this instance, then, when most needed ? We say not so : we say only that Madame la Marquise had human freewill in her too ; that all the young Mirabeaus were likely to have human freewill in great plenty ; that within doors as without the Devil is busy. Most unsuccessful is the Marquis as ruler of men : his family kingdom, for the most

part, little otherwise than in a state of mutiny. A sceptre as of Rhadamanthus will sway and drill that household into perfection of Harrison Clockwork; and cannot do it. The royal ukase goes forth in its calm irrefragable justice; meets hesitation, disobedience open or concealed. Reprimand is followed by remonstrance; harsh coming thunder mutters, growl answering growl. With unaffectedly astonished eye the Marquis appeals to Destiny and Heaven; explodes, since he needs must then, in red lightning of paternal authority. How it went, or who by forethought might be to blame, one knows not; for the *Fils Adoptif*, hemmed-in by still extant relations, is extremely reticent on these points: a certain Dame de Pailly, 'from Switzerland, very beautiful and very artful,' glides half-seen through the Mirabeau household (the Marquis's Orthodoxy, as we said, being but of the diluted kind): there are eavesdroppers, confidential servants; there are Pride, Anger, Uncharitableness, Sublime Pedantry, and the Devil always busy. Such a figure as Pailly, of herself, bodes good to no one.

Enough, there are Lawsuits, *Lettres de Cachet;* on all hands *peine forte et dure*. Lawsuits, long drawn out, before gaping *Parlements*, between man and wife: to the scandal of an unrighteous world; how much more of a righteous Marquis, minded once to be an example to it! *Lettres de Cachet*, to the number, as some count, of fifty-four, first and last, for the use of a single Marquis: at times the whole Mirabeau fireside is seen empty, except Pailly and Marquis; each individual sitting in his separate Stronghouse, there to bethink himself. Stiff are your tempers, ye young Mirabeaus; not stiffer than mine the old one's! What pangs it has cost the fond paternal heart to go through all this Brutus duty, the Marquis knows, and Heaven. In a less degree, what pangs it may cost the filial heart to go *under* (or undergo) the same! The former set of pangs he, aided by Heaven, crushes-down into his soul suppressively, as beseems a man and Mirabeau: the latter set,—are they not self-sought pangs; medicinal; which will cease of their own accord, when the unparalleled filial impiety pleases to cease? For the rest, looking at such a world and such a family, at these prison-houses, mountains of divorce-papers, and the staggering state of French statesmen, a Friend of Men may pretty naturally ask himself, Am not I a strong old Marquis, then,

whom all this has not driven into Bedlam,—not into hypochondria, dyspepsia even? The Heavens are bounteous, and make the back equal to the burden.

Out of all which circumstances, and of such struggle against them, there has come forth this Marquis de Mirabeau, shaped (it was the shape *he* could arrive at) into one of the most singular Sublime Pedants that ever stepped the soil of France. Solemn moral rigour, as of some antique Presbyterian Ruling Elder: heavy breadth, dull heat, choler and pride as of an old 'Bozzy of Auchinleck;' then a high-flown euphuistic courtesy, the airiest mincing ways, suitable to your French Seigneur! How the two divine missions, for both seem to him divine, of Riquetti and Man of Genius or World-schoolmaster, blend themselves; and philosophism, chivalrous euphuism, presbyterian ruling-elderism, all in such strength, have met, to give the world assurance of a man! There never entered the brain of Hogarth, or of rare old Ben, such a piece of Humour (high meeting with low, and laughter with tears) as, in this brave old Riquetti, Nature has presented us ready-made.

For withal there is such genius in him; rich depth of character; indestructible cheerfulness and health breaking out, in spite of these divorce-papers, ever and anon,—like strong sunlight in thundery weather. We have heard of the 'strife of Fate with Free-will' producing Greek Tragedies, but never heard it till now produce such astonishing comico-tragical French Farces. Blessed old Marquis,—or else accursed! He is there, with his broad bull-brow; with the huge cheekbones; those deep eyes, glazed as in weariness; the lower visage puckered into a simpering graciosity, which would pass itself off for a kind of smile. What to do with him? Welcome, thou tough old Marquis, with thy better and thy worse! There is stuff in thee (very different from moonshine and formula); and stuff is stuff, were it never so crabbed.

Besides the old Marquis de Mirabeau, there is a Brother, the Bailli de Mirabeau: a man who, serving as Knight of Malta, governing in Guadaloupe, fighting and doing hard sea-duty, has sown his wild oats long since; and settled down here, in the old 'Castle of Mirabeau on its sheer rock' (for the Marquis usually lives at Bignon, another estate within reach of Paris), into one of the worthiest quiet uncles and house-friends.

It is very beautiful, this mild strength, mild clearness and justice of the brave Bailli, in contrast with his brother's nodosity; whom he comforts, defends, admonishes, even rebukes; and on the whole reverences, both as head Riquetti and as World-schoolmaster, beyond all living men. The frank true love of these two brothers is the fairest feature in Mirabeaudom; indeed the only feature which is always fair. Letters pass continually: in letter and extract we here, from time to time, witness (in these Eight chaotic Volumes) the various personages speak their dialogue, unfold their farce-tragedy. The *Fils Adoptif* admits mankind into this strange household; though stingily, uncomfortably, and all in darkness, save for his own capricious dark-lantern. Seen or half-seen, it is a stage; as the whole world is. What with personages, what with destinies, no stranger house-drama was enacting on the Earth at that time.

Under such auspices, which were not yet ripened into events and fatalities, but yet were inevitably ripening towards such, did Gabriel Honoré, at the Mansion of Bignon, between Sens and Nemours, on the 9th day of March 1749, first see the light. He was the fifth child; the second male child; yet born heir, the first having died in the cradle. A magnificent 'enormous' fellow, as the gossips had to admit, almost with terror: the head especially great; 'two grinders' in it, already shot!—Rough-hewn truly, yet with bulk, with limbs, vigour bidding fair to do honour to the line. The paternal Marquis, to whom they said, "*N'ayez pas peur*, Don't be frightened," gazed joyful, we can fancy, and not fearful, on this product of his; the stiff pedant features relaxing into a veritable smile. Smile, O paternal Marquis: the future indeed 'veils sorrow and joy,' one knows not in what proportion; but here is a new Riquetti, whom the gods send; with the rudiments in him, thou wouldst guess, of a very Hercules, fit for Twelve Labours, which surely are themselves the best joys. Look at the oaf, how he sprawls. No stranger Riquetti ever sprawled under our Sun: it is as if, in this thy man-child, Destiny had swept together all the wildnesses and strengths of the Riquetti lineage, and flung him forth as her finale in that kind. Not without a vocation! He is the last of the Riquettis; and shall do work long memorable among mortals.

Truly, looking now into the matter, we might say, in spite of the gossips, that on this whole Planet, in those years, there was hardly born such a man-child as this same, in the 'Mansion-house of Bignon, not far from Paris,' whom they named Gabriel Honoré. Nowhere, we say, came there a stouter or braver into this Earth; whither they come marching by the legion and the myriad, out of Eternity and Night!—Except, indeed, what is notable enough, one other that arrived some few months later, at the town of Frankfort-on-Mayn, and got christened *Johann Wolfgang Goethe*. Then again, in some ten years more, there came another, still liker Gabriel Honoré in his brawny ways. It was into a mean hut that this one came, an infirm hut (which the wind blew down at the time), in the shire of Ayr, in Scotland: him they named *Robert Burns*. These, in that epoch, were the Well-born of the World; by whom the world's history was to be carried on. Ah, could the well-born of the world be always rightly bred, rightly entreated there, what a world were it! But it is not so; it is the reverse of so. And then few, like that Frankfort one, can peaceably vanquish the world, with its black imbroglios; and shine above it, in serene help to it, like a sun! The most can but *Titanically* vanquish it, or be vanquished by it: hence, instead of light (stillest and strongest of things), we have but lightning; red fire, and oftentimes conflagrations, which are very woful.

Be that as it might, Marquis Mirabeau determined to give his son, and heir of all the Riquettis, such an education as no Riquetti had yet been privileged with. Being a world-schoolmaster (and indeed a *Martinus Scriblerus*, as we here find, more ways than one), this was not strange in him; but the results were very lamentable. Considering the matter now, at this impartial distance, you are lost in wonder at the good Marquis; know not whether to laugh at him, or weep over him; and on the whole are bound to do both. A more sufficient product of Nature than this 'enormous Gabriel,' as we said, need not have been wished for: 'beating his nurse,' but then loving her, and loving the whole world; of large desire, truly, but desire towards *all* things, the highest and the lowest: in other words, a large mass of *life* in him, a large man waiting there! Does he not rummage (the rough cub, now tenfold rougher by the effect of small-pox) in all places, seeking something to know;

dive down to the most unheard-of recesses for papers to read? Does he not, spontaneously, give his hat to a peasant-boy whose head-gear was defective? He writes the most sagacious things in his fifth year, extempore, at table; setting forth what '*Monsieur Moi*, Mr. Me,' is bound to do. A rough strong genuine soul, of the frankest open temper; full of loving fire and strength; looking out so brisk with his clear hazel eyes, with his brisk sturdy bulk, what might not fair breeding have done for him! On so many occasions, one feels as if he needed nothing in the world but to be well let alone.

But no; the scientific paternal hand must interfere, at every turn, to assist Nature: the young lion's-whelp has to grow up all bestrapped, bemuzzled in the most extraordinary manner: shall wax and unfold himself by theory of education, by square and rule,—going punctual, all the way, like Harrison Clockwork, according to the theoretic program; or *else*—! O Marquis, World-schoolmaster, what theory of education is this? No lion's-whelp or young Mirabeau will go like clockwork, but far otherwise. 'He that spareth the rod hateth the child;' that on its side is true: and yet Nature too is strong: 'Nature will come running back, though thou expel her with a fork!' In one point of view there is nothing more Hogarthian comic than this long Peter Peebles' *ganging plea* of 'Marquis Mirabeau *versus* Nature and others:' yet in a deeper point of view it is but too serious. Candid history will say, that whatsoever of worst it was in the power of art to do against this young Gabriel Honoré, was done. Not with unkind intentions; nay, with intentions which, at least, began in kindness. How much better was Burns's education (though this too went on under the grimmest pressures), on the wild hill-side, by the brave peasant's hearth, with no theory of education at all, but poverty, toil, tempest and the handles of the plough!

At bottom, the Marquis's wish and purpose was not complex, but simple. That Gabriel Honoré de Riquetti shall become the very same man that Victor de Riquetti is; perfect as he is perfect: this will satisfy the fond father's heart, and nothing short of this. Better exemplar, truly, were hard to find; and yet, O Victor de Riquetti, poor Gabriel, on his side, wishes to be Gabriel and not Victor! Stiffer loving Pedant never had a more elastic loving Pupil. Offences (of mere *elas-*

ticity, mere natural springing-up, for most part) accumulate by addition : Madame Pailly and the confidential servants, on this as on all matters, are busy. The household itself is darkening, the mistress of it gone ; the Lawsuits, and by and by Divorce-Lawsuits, have begun. Worse will grow worse, and ever worse, till Rhadamanthus Scriblerus Marquis de Mirabeau, swaying vainly the sceptre of order, see himself environed by a waste chaos as of Bedlam. Stiff is he ; elastic, and yet still loving, reverent, is his son and pupil. Thus cruelty, and yearnings that must be suppressed ; indignant revolt, and hot tears of penitence, alternate, in the strangest way, between the two ; and for long years our young Alcides has, by Destiny, his own Demon and Juno de Pailly, Labours enough imposed on him.

But, to judge what a task was set this poor paternal Marquis, let us listen to the following successive utterances from him ; which he emits, in letter after letter, mostly into the ear of his brother the good Bailli. Cluck, cluck,—is it not as the sound of an agitated parent-fowl, now in terror, now in anger, at the brood it has brought out ?

'This creature promises to be a very pretty subject.' 'Talent in plenty, and cleverness, but more faults still inherent in the substance of him.' 'Only just come into life, and the extravasation (*extravasement*) of the thing already visible ! A spirit cross-grained, fantastic, iracund, incompatible, tending towards evil before knowing it, or being capable of it.' 'A high heart under the jacket of a boy ; it has a strange instinct of pride this creature ; noble withal ; the embryo of a shaggy-headed bully and killcow, that would swallow all the world, and is not twelve years old yet.' 'A type, profoundly inconceivable, of baseness, sheer dull grossness (*platitude absolue*), and the quality of your dirty, rough-crusted caterpillar, that will never uncrust itself or fly.' 'An intelligence, a memory, a capacity, that strike you, that astonish, that frighten you.' 'A nothing bedizened with crotchets. May fling dust in the eyes of silly women, but will never be the fourth part of a man, if by good luck he be anything.' 'One whom you may call ill-born, this elder lad of mine ; who bodes, at least hitherto, as if he could become nothing but a madman : almost invincibly maniac, with all the vile qualities of the maternal stock over and above. As he has a great many masters, and all, from the confessor to the comrade, are so many reporters for me, I see the nature of the beast, and don't think we shall ever do any good with him.'

In a word, offences (of elasticity or expansivity) have accumulated to such height in the lad's fifteenth year, that there is

a determination taken, on the part of Rhadamanthus Scriblerus, to pack him out of doors, one way or the other. After various plannings, the plan of one Abbé Choquenard's Boarding-school is fallen upon : the rebellious Expansive shall to Paris ; there, under ferula and short-commons, contract himself and consider. Farther, as the name Mirabeau is honourable and right honourable, he shall not have the honour of it ; never again, but be called *Pierre Buffière*, till his ways decidedly alter. This *Pierre Buffière* was the name of an estate of his mother's in the Limousin : sad fuel of those smoking lawsuits which at length blazed out as divorce-lawsuits. Wearing this melancholy nickname of Peter Buffière, as a perpetual badge, had poor Gabriel Honoré to go about for a number of years ; like a misbehaved soldier with his eyebrows shaven off ; alas, only a fifteen-years recruit yet, too young for that !

Nevertheless, named or shorn of his name, Peter or Gabriel, the youth himself was still there. At Choquenard's Boarding-school, as always afterwards in life, he carries with him, he unfolds and employs, the qualities which Nature gave, which no shearing or shaving of art and mistreatment could take away. The *Fils Adoptif* gives a grand list of studies followed, acquisitions made : ancient languages ('and we have a thousand proofs of his indefatigable tenacity in this respect') ; modern languages, English, Italian, German, Spanish ; then 'passionate study of mathematics ;' design, pictorial and geometrical ; music, so as to read it at sight, nay to compose in it ; singing, to a high degree ; 'equitation, fencing, dancing, swimming and tennis :' if only the half of which were true, can we say that Pierre Buffière spent his time ill ?

What is more precisely certain, the disgraced Buffière worked his way very soon into the good affections of all and sundry, in this House of Discipline, who came in contact with him ; schoolfellows, teachers, the Abbé Choquenard himself. For, said the paternal Marquis, he has the tongue of the Old Serpent ! In fact, it is very notable how poor Buffière, Comte de Mirabeau, revolutionary King Riquetti, or whatever else they might call him, let him come, under what discommendation he might, into any circle of men, was sure to make them his erelong. To the last, no man could look into him with his own eyes, and continue to hate him. He could talk men

over, then? Yes, O Reader: and he could *act* men over: for, at bottom, that was it. The large open soul of the man, purposing deliberately no paltry, unkindly or dishonest thing towards any creature, was felt to be withal a *brother's* soul. Defaced by black drossy obscurations very many; but yet shining out, lustrous, warm; in its troublous effulgence, great! That a man be loved the better by men the nearer they come to him: is not this the fact of all facts? To know what extent of prudential diplomacy (good, indifferent and even bad) a man has, ask public opinion, journalistic rumour, or at most the persons he dines with: to know what of real worth is in him, ask infinitely deeper and farther; ask, first of all, those who have tried by experiment; who, were they the foolishest people, can answer pertinently here if anywhere. 'Those at a distance esteem of me a little worse than I; those near at hand a little better than I:' so said the good Sir Thomas Browne; so will all men say who have much to say on that.

The Choquenard Military Boarding-school having, if not fulfilled its function, yet ceased to be a house of penance, and failed of its function, Marquis Mirabeau determined to try the Army. Nay, it would seem, the wicked mother has been privily sending him money; which he, the traitor, has accepted! To the army, therefore. And so Pierre Buffière has a basnet on his big head; the shaggy pock-pitted visage looks martially from under horse-hair and clear metal; he dresses rank, with tight bridle-hand and drawn falchion, in the town of Saintes, as a bold volunteer dragoon. His age was but eighteen as yet and some months.

The people of Saintes grew to like him amazingly; would even 'have lent him money to any extent.' His Colonel, one De Lambert, proved to be a martinet, of sharp sour temper: the shaggy visage of Buffière, radiant through its seaminess with several things, had not altogether the happiness to content him. Furthermore there was an *Archer* (Bailiff) at Saintes, who had a daughter: she, foolish minx, liked the Buffière visage *better* even than the Colonel's! For one can fancy what a pleader Buffière was, in this great cause; with the tongue of the Old Serpent. It was his first *amourette;* plainly triumphant; the beginning of a quite unheard-of career in that kind. The aggrieved Colonel emitted 'satires' through the

mess-rooms; this bold volunteer dragoon was not the man to give him worse than he brought: matters fell into a very unsatisfactory state between them. To crown the whole, Buffière went one evening (contrary to wont, now and always) to the gaming-table, and lost four *louis*. Insubordination, gambling, Archer's daughter! Rhadamanthus thunders from Bignon: Buffière doffs his basnet, flies covertly to Paris. Negotiation there now was; confidential spy to Saintes; correspondence, fulmination; Dupont de Nemours as daysman between a Colonel and a Marquis, both in high wrath,—Buffière to pay the piper! Confidential spy takes evidence; the whole atrocity comes to light: what wilt thou do, O Marquis, with this devil's-child of thine? Send him to Surinam; let the Tropical heats and rains tame the hot liver of him!—so whispered paternal Brutus'-justice and Dame Pailly; but milder thoughts prevailed. *Lettre de Cachet* and the Isle of Rhé shall be tried first. Thither fares poor Buffière; not with Archer's daughters, but with Archers; amid the dull rustle and autumnal brown of the falling leaves of 1768, his nineteenth autumn. It is his second Hercules' Labour; the Choquenard Boarding-house was the first. Bemoaned by the loud Atlantic he shall sit there, in winter season, under ward of a Bailli d'Aulan, governor of the place, and said to be a very Cerberus.

At Rhé the old game is played: in few weeks, the Cerberus Bailli is Buffière's; baying, out of all his throats, in Buffière's behalf! What 'sorcery' is this that the rebellious prodigy has in him, O Marquis? Hypocrisy, cozenage, which no governor of strong places can resist? Nothing short of the hot swamps of Surinam will hold him quiet, then? Happily there is fighting in Corsica; Paoli fighting on his last legs there; and Baron de Vaux wants fresh troops against him. Buffière, though he likes not the cause, will go thither gladly; and fight his very best: how happy if, by any fighting, he can conquer back his baptismal name, and some gleam of paternal tolerance! After much soliciting, his prayer is acceded to: Buffière, with the rank now of 'Sublieutenant of Foot, in the Legion of Lorraine,' gets across the country to Toulon, in the month of April; and enters 'on the plain which furrows itself without plough' (euphuistic for *ocean*): 'God grant he may not have to row there one day,'—in red cap, as convict galley-

slave! Such is the paternal benediction and prayer; which was realised. Nay, Buffière, it would seem, before quitting Rochelle, indeed 'hardly yet two hours out of the fortress of Rhé,' had fallen into a new atrocity,—his first duel; a certain quondam messmate (discharged for swindling) having claimed acquaintance with him on the streets; which claim Buffière saw good to refuse; and even to resist, when demanded at the sword's point! The 'Corsican Buccaneer, *flibustier Corse*,' that he is!

The Corsican Buccaneer did, as usual, a giant's or two giants' work in Corsica; fighting, writing, loving; 'eight hours a-day of study;' and gained golden opinions from all manner of men and women. It was his own notion that Nature had meant him for a soldier; he felt so equable and at home in that business,—the wreck of discordant death-tumult, and roar of cannon, serving as a fine regulatory marching-music for him. Doubtless Nature meant him for a Man of Action; as she means all great souls that have a strong body to dwell in: but Nature will adjust herself to much. In the course of twelve months, in May 1770, Buffière gets back to Toulon; with much manuscript in his pocket; his head full of military and all other lore, 'like a library turned topsy-turvy;' his character much risen, as we said, with every one. The brave Bailli Mirabeau, though almost against principle, cannot refuse to see a chief nephew, as he passes so near the old Castle on the Durance: the good uncle is charmed with him; finds, 'under features terribly seamed and altered from what they were,' bodily and mentally all that is royal and strong, nay 'an expression of something refined, something gracious;' declares him, after several days of incessant talk, to be the best fellow on earth if well dealt with, 'who will shape into statesman, generalissimo, pope, what thou pleasest to desire!' Or, shall we give poor Buffière's testimonial in mess-room dialect; in its native twanging vociferosity, and garnished with old oaths,—which, alas, have become for us almost old prayers now,—the vociferous Moustachio-figures whom they twanged through having all vanished so long since: "*Morbleu, Monsieur l'Abbé; c'est un garçon diablement vif; mais c'est un bon garçon, qui a de l'esprit comme trois cent mille diables; et parbleu, un homme très brave.*"

Moved by all manner of testimonials and entreaties from uncle and family, the rigid Marquis consents, not without difficulty, to see this anomalous Peter Buffière of his; and then, after solemn deliberation, even to un-Peter him, and give him back his name. It was in September that they met; at Aiguesperse, in the Limousin near the *lands* of *Pierre Buffière*. Soft ruth comes stealing through the Rhadamanthine heart; tremblings of faint hope even, which, however, must veil itself in austerity and rigidity. The Marquis writes: 'I perorate him 'very much;' observe 'my man, how he droops his nose, and 'looks fixedly, a sign that he is reflecting; or whirls away his 'head, hiding a tear: serious, now mild, now severe, we give 'it him alternately; it is thus I manage the mouth of this fiery 'animal.' Had he but read the *Ephémérides*, the *Economiques*, the *Précis des Elémens* ('the most laboured book I have done, though I wrote it in such health'); had he but got grounded in my Political Economy! Which, however, he does not take to with any heart. On the contrary, he unhappily finds it hollow, pragmatical, a barren jingle of formulas; pedantic even; unnutritive as the east wind. Blasphemous words; which (or the like of them) any eavesdropper has but to report to 'the Master'!—And yet, after all, is it not a brave Gabriel this rough-built young Hercules; and has finished handsomely his Second Labour? The head of the fellow is 'a wind-mill and fire-mill of ideas.' The War-office makes him captain, and he is passionate for following soldiership: but then, unluckily, your Alexander needs such tools; a whole world for workshop! 'Where are the armies and herring-shoals of men to come from? 'Does he think I have money,' snuffles the old Marquis, 'to get 'him up battles like Harlequin and Scaramouch?' The fool! he shall settle down into rurality; first, however, though it is a risk, see a little of Paris.

At Paris, through winter, the brave Gabriel carries all before him; shines in saloons, in the Versailles Œil-de-Bœuf; dines with your Duke of Orleans (young Chartres, not yet become *Egalité*, hob-nobbing with him); dines with your Guéménés, Broglies, and mere Grandeurs; and is invited to hunt. Even the old women are charmed with him, and rustle in their satins: such a light has not risen in the Œil-de-Bœuf for some while. Grant, O Marquis, that there are worse sad-dogs than

this. The Marquis grants partially; and yet, and yet! Few things are notabler than these successive surveys by the old Marquis, critically scanning his young Count:

'I am on my guard; remembering how vivacity of head may deceive you as to a character of morass (*de tourbe*): but, all considered, one must give him store of exercise; what the devil else to do with such exuberance, intellectual and sanguineous? I know no woman but the Empress of Russia with whom this man were good to marry yet.' 'Hard to find a dog (*drôle*) that had more talent and action in the head of him than this; he would reduce the devil to terms.' 'Thy nephew Whirlwind (*l'Ouragan*) assists me; yesterday the valet Luce, who is a sort of privileged simpleton, said pleasantly, "Confess, M. le Comte, a man's body is very unhappy to carry a head like that."' 'The *terrible gift of familiarity* (as Pope Gregory called it)! He turns the great people here round his finger.'

Or again, though all this is some years afterwards: 'They have never done telling me that he is easy to set a-rearing; that you cannot speak to him reproachfully but his eyes, his lips, his colour testify that all is *giving way;* on the other hand, the smallest word of tenderness will make him burst into tears, and he would fling himself into the fire for you.' 'I pass my life in cramming him (*à le bourrer*) with principles, with all that I know; for this man, ever the same as to his fundamental properties, has done nothing by these long and solid studies but augment the rubbish-heap in his head, which is a library turned topsy-turvy; and then his talent for dazzling by superficials, for he has *snuffed-up all formulas*, and cannot substantiate anything.' 'A wicker-basket, that lets all through; disorder born; credulous as a nurse; indiscreet; a liar' (kind of white liar), 'by exaggeration, affirmation, effrontery, without need, and merely to tell histories; a confidence that dazzles you on everything; cleverness and talent without limit. For the rest, the vices have infinitely less root in him than the virtues; all is facility, impetuosity, ineffectuality (not for want of fire, but of plan); wrong-spun, ravelled (*défaufilé*) in character: a mind that meditates in the vague, and builds of soap-bells.' 'Spite of the bitter ugliness, the intercadent step, the trenchant breathless blown-up precipitation, and the look, or, to say better, the atrocious eyebrow of this man when he listens and reflects, something told me that it was all but a scarecrow of old cloth, this ferocious outward garniture of his; that, at bottom, here was perhaps the man in all France least capable of deliberate wickedness.' 'Pie and jay by instinct.' 'Wholly reflex and reverberance (*tout de reflet et de réverbère*); drawn to the right by his heart, to the left by his head, which he carries four paces from him.' 'May become the Coryphæus of the Time.' 'A blinkard (*myope*) precipitancy, born with him, which makes him take the quagmire for firm earth—'

—Cluck, cluck,—in the name of all the gods, what prodigy is this I have hatched? Web-footed, broad-billed; which will run and drown itself, if Mercy and the parent-fowl prevent not!

How inexpressibly true, meanwhile, is this that the old Marquis says: 'He has snuffed-up all formulas (*il a humé toutes les formules*),' and made away with them! Formulas, indeed, if we think of it, Formulas and Gabriel Honoré had been, and were to be, at death-feud from first to last. What formula of this formalised (established) world had been a kind one to Gabriel? His soul could find no shelter in them, they were unbelievable; his body no solacement, they were tyrannical, unfair. If there were not pabulum and substance beyond formulas, and in spite of them, then woe to him! To this man formulas would yield no existence or habitation, if it were not in the Isle of Rhé and such places; but threatened to choke the life out of him: either formulas or he must go to the wall; and so, after a tough fight, *they*, as it proves, will go. So cunningly thrifty is Destiny; and is quietly shaping her tools for the work they are to do, whilst she seems but spoiling and breaking them! For, consider, O Marquis, whether France herself will not by and by have to swallow a formula or two? This sight thou lookest on from the baths of Mount d'Or, does it not bode something of that kind? A summer day in the year 1777:

'O Madame! the narrations I would give you, if I had not a score of letters to answer, on dull sad business! I would paint to you the votive feast of this town, which took place on the 14th. The savages descending in torrents from the Mountains,—our people ordered not to stir out. The curate with surplice and stole; public justice in periwig; *maréchaussée*, sabre in hand, guarding the place, before the bagpipes were permitted to begin. The dance interrupted, a quarter of an hour after, by battle; the cries and fierce hissings of the children, of the infirm, and other onlookers, ogling it, tarring it on, as the mob does when dogs fight. Frightful men, or rather wild creatures of the forest, in coarse woollen jupes, and broad girths of leather studded with copper nails; of gigantic stature, heightened by the high sabots; rising still higher on tip-toe, to look at the battle; beating time to it; rubbing their sides with their elbows: their face haggard, covered with their long greasy hair; top of the visage waxing pale, bottom of it twisting itself into the rudiments of a cruel laugh, a ferocious impatience.—And these people pay the *taille!* And you want to take from them their salt too! And you know not what you strip bare, or, as

you call it, govern; what, with the heedless cowardly squirt of your pen, you will think you can continue stripping with impunity forever, till the Catastrophe come! Such sights recall deep thoughts to one. "Poor Jean-Jacques!" I said to myself: "they that sent thee, and thy System, to copy music among such a People as these same, have confuted thy System but ill!" But, on the other hand, these thoughts were consolatory for a man who has all his life preached the necessity of solacing the poor, of universal instruction; who has tried to show what such instruction and such solacement ought to be, if it would form a barrier (the sole possible barrier) between oppression and revolt; the sole but the infallible treaty of peace between the high and the low! Ah, Madame! this government by blind-man's-buff, stumbling along too far, will end by the GENERAL OVERTURN.'

Prophetic Marquis!—Might other nations listen to thee better than France did: for it concerns them *all!* But now is it not curious to think how the whole world might have gone so differently, but for this very prophet? Had the young Mirabeau had a father as other men have; or even no father at all! Consider him, in that case, rising by natural gradation, by the rank, the opportunity, the irrepressible buoyant faculties he had, step after step, to official place,—to the chief official place; as in a time when Turgots, Neckers, and men of ability, were grown indispensable, he was sure to have done. By natural witchery he bewitches Marie-Antoinette; her most of all, with her quick susceptive instincts, her quick sense for whatever was great and noble, her quick hatred for whatever was but pedantic, Neckerish, Fayettish, and pretending to be great. King Louis is a nullity; happily then reduced to be one: there would then have been at the summit of France the one French Man who could have grappled with that great Question; who, yielding and refusing, managing, guiding, and, in short, *seeing* and daring what was to be done, had perhaps saved France her Revolution; remaking her by peaceabler methods! But to the Supreme Powers it seemed not so. Once, after a thousand years, all nations were to see the great Conflagration and Self-combustion of a Nation,—and learn from it if they could. And now, for a Swallower of Formulas, was there a better schoolmaster in the world than this very Friend of Men; a better education conceivable than this which Alcides-Mirabeau had? Trust in Heaven, good reader, for the fate of nations, for the fall of a sparrow.

Gabriel Honoré has acquitted himself so well in Paris, turning the great people round his thumb, with that '*fond gaillard*, basis of gaiety,' with that '*terrible don de la familiarité*;' with those ways he has. Neither, in the quite opposite Man-of-business department, when summer comes and rurality with it, is he found wanting. In the summer of the year, the old Friend of Men despatches him to the Limousin, to his own estate of Pierre Buffière, or his wife's own estate (under the law-balance about this time), to see whether anything can be done for men there. Much is to be done there; the Peasants, short of all things, even of victuals, here as everywhere, wear 'a settled *souffre-douleur* (pain-stricken) look, as if they reckoned that the pillage of men was an inevitable ordinance of Heaven, to be put up with like the wind and the hail.' Here, in the solitude of the Limousin, Gabriel is still Gabriel: he rides, he writes and runs; eats out of the poor people's pots; speaks to them, redresses them; institutes a court of Villager '*prudhommes*, good men and true,'—once more carries all before him. Confess, O Rhadamanthine Marquis, we say again, that there are worse sad-dogs than this! 'He is,' confesses the Marquis, 'the Demon of the Impossible, *le démon de la chose impossible*.'[3] Most true this also: *impossible* is a word not in his dictionary. Thus the same Gabriel Honoré, long afterwards (as Dumont will witness), orders his secretary to do some miracle or other, miraculous within the time. The secretary answers, "Monsieur, it is impossible."—"Impossible?" answers Gabriel: "*Ne me dites jamais ce bête de mot*, Never name to me that blockhead of a word!" Really, one would say, a good fellow, were he well dealt with,—though still broad-billed, and with latent tendencies to take the water. The following otherwise insignificant Letter, addressed to the Bailli, seems to us worth copying. Is not his young Lordship, if still in the dandy-state and style-of-mockery, very handsome in it; standing there in the snow? It is of date December 1771, and far onwards on the road towards Mirabeau Castle:

'*Fracti bello satisque repulsi ductores Danaûm:* here, dear uncle, is a beginning in good Latin, which means that I am broken with fatigue, not having, this whole week, slept more than sentinels do; and sounding, at the same time, with the wheels of my vehicle, most of the

[3] See La Fontaine: *Contes*, l. iv. c. 15.

ruts and jolts that lie between Paris and Marseilles. Ruts deep and numerous. Moreover, my axle broke between Mucreau, Romané, Chambertin and Beaune; the centre of four wine districts: what a geographical point, if I had had the wit to be a drunkard! The mischief happened towards five in the evening; my lackey had gone on before. There fell nothing at the time but melted snow; happily it afterwards took some consistency. The neighbourhood of Beaune made me hope to find genius in the natives of the country: I had need of good counsel; the devil counselled me at first to swear, but that whim passed, and I fell by preference into the temptation of laughing; for a holy priest came jogging up, wrapt to the chin; against the blessed visage of whom the sleet was beating, which made him cut so singular a face, that I think this was the thing drove me from swearing. The holy man inquired, seeing my chaise on its beam-ends, and one of the wheels wanting, whether anything had befallen? I answered, "there was nothing falling here but snow." "Ah," said he, ingeniously, "it is your chaise, then, that is broken." I admired the sagacity of the man, and begged him to double his pace, with his horse's permission (who was also making a pleasant expression of countenance, as the snow beat on his nose); and to be so good as give notice at Chaigny that I was there. He assured me he would tell it to the postmistress herself, she being his cousin; that she was a very amiable woman, married three years ago to one of the honestest men of the place, nephew to the king's procureur at ——: in fine, after giving me all the outs and ins of himself, the curate, of his cousin, his cousin's husband, and I know not whom more, he was pleased to give the spurs to his horse, which thereupon gave a grunt, and went on.

'I forgot to tell you that I had sent the postillion off to Mucreau, which he knew the road to, for he went thither daily, he said, to have a glass; a thing I could well believe, or even two glasses. The man was but tipsified when he went; happily, when he returned, which was very late, he was drunk. I walked sentry: several Beaune men passed, all of whom asked me, if anything had befallen? I answered one of them, that it was an experiment; that I had been sent from Paris to see whether a chaise would run with one wheel; mine had come so far, but I was going to write that two wheels were preferable. At this moment my worthy friend struck his shin against the other wheel; clapped his hand on the hurt place; swore, as I had near done; and then said, smiling, "Ah, Monsieur, there is the other wheel!" "The devil there is!" said I, as if astonished. Another, after examining long, with a very capable air, informed me, "*Ma foi*, Monsieur! it is your *essi*" (meaning *essieu*, or axle) "that is broken."'

Mirabeau's errand to Provence, in this winter-season, was several-fold. To look after the Mirabeau estates; to domesticate himself among his people and peers in that region;—per-

haps to choose a wife. Lately, as we saw, the old Marquis could think of none suitable, if it were not the Empress Catherine. But Gabriel has ripened astonishingly since that, under this sunshine of paternal favour,—the first gleam of such weather he has ever had. Short of the Empress, it were very well to marry, the Marquis now thinks, provided your bride had money. A bride, not with money, yet with connexions, expectations, is found; and by stormy eloquence (Marquis seconding) is carried: woe worth the hour! Her portrait, by the seconding Marquis himself, is not very captivating: 'Marie-'Emilie de Covet, only daughter of the Marquis de Marignane, 'in her eighteenth year then; she had a very ordinary face, 'even a vulgar one at the first glance; brown, nay almost 'tawny (*mauricaud*); fine eyes, fine hair; teeth not good, but 'a prettyish continual smile; figure small, but agreeable, though 'leaning a little to one side; showed great sprightliness of 'mind, ingenuous, adroit, delicate, lively, sportful; one of the 'most essentially pretty characters.' This brown, almost tawny little woman, much of a fool too, Mirabeau gets to wife, on the 22d of June 1772. With her, and with a pension of 3,000 francs from his father-in-law, and one of 6,000 from his own father (say 500*l.* in all), and rich expectancies, he shall sit down, in the bottom of Provence, by his own hired hearth, in the town of Aix, and bless Heaven.

Candour will admit that this young Alexander, just beginning his twenty-fourth year, might grumble a little, seeing only one such world to conquer. However, he had his books, he had his hopes; health, faculty; a Universe (whereof even the town of Aix formed part) all rich with fruit and forbidden-fruit round him; the unspeakable 'seed-field of Time' wherein to sow: he said to himself, Go to, I will be wise. And yet human nature is frail. One can judge too, whether the old Marquis, now coming into decided lawsuit with his wife, was of a humour to forgive peccadilloes. The terrible, hoarsely calm, Rhadamanthine way in which he expresses himself on this matter of the lawsuit to his brother, and enjoins silence from all mortals but him, might affect weak nerves; wherefore, contrary to purpose, we omit it. O just Marquis! In fact, the Riquetti household at this time can do little for frail human nature; except, perhaps, make it fall faster. The Riquetti house-

hold is getting scattered ; not always led asunder, but driven and hurled asunder : the tornado times for it have begun. One daughter is Madame du Saillant (still living), a judicious sister : another is Madame de Cabris, not so judicious ; for, indeed, her husband has lawsuits,—owing to 'defamatory couplets' proceeding from him ; she gets 'insulted on the public promenade of Grasse,' by a certain Baron de Villeneuve-Moans, whom some defamatory couplet had touched upon ;—all the parties in the business being fools. Nay, poor woman, she by and by, we find, takes-up with preternuptial persons ; with a certain Brianson in epaulettes, described candidly, by the *Fils Adoptif*, as 'a man who'—is not fit to be described.

A young heir-apparent of all the Mirabeaus is required to make some figure ; especially in marrying himself. The present young heir-apparent has nothing to make a figure with but bare five-hundred a-year, and very considerable debts. Old Mirabeau is hard as the Mosaic rock, and no wand proves miraculous on him ; for *trousseaus, cadeaus*, foot-washings, festivities and house-heatings, he does simply not yield one sou. The heir must himself yield them. He does so, and handsomely : but, alas, the five-hundred a-year, and very considerable debts ? Quit Aix and dinner-giving ; retire to the old Château in the gorge of two valleys ! Devised and done. But now, a young Wife used to the delicacies of life, ought she not to have some suite of rooms done-up for her ? Upholsterers hammer and furbish ; with effect ; not without bills. Then the very considerable Jew-debts ! Poor Mirabeau sees nothing for it, but to run to the father-in-law with tears in his eyes ; and conjure him to make those 'rich expectations' in some measure fruitions. Forty-thousand francs ; to such length will the father-in-law, moved by these tears, by this fire-eloquence, table ready-money ; provided old Marquis Mirabeau, who has some provisional reversionary interest in the thing, will grant quittance. Old Marquis Mirabeau, written to in the most impassioned persuasive manner, answers by a letter, of the sort they call *Sealed* Letter (*Lettre de Cachet*), ordering the impassioned Persuasive, under his Majesty's hand and seal, to bundle into Coventry as we should say, into Manosque as the Sealed Letter says !—Farewell, thou old Château, with thy upholstered rooms, on thy sheer rock, by the angry-flowing Durance : welcome,

thou miserable little borough of Manosque, since hither Fate drives us! In Manosque, too, a man can live, and read; can write an *Essai sur le Despotisme* (and have it printed in Switzerland, 1774); full of fire and rough vigour, and still worth reading.

The *Essay on Despotism*, with so little of the *Ephémérides* and Quesnay in it, could find but a hard critic in the old Marquis; snuffling-out something (one fancies) about 'Reflex and reverberance;' formulas getting snuffed-up; rash hare-brain treating matters that require age and gravity;—however, let it pass. Unhappily there came other offences. A certain gawk, named Chevalier de Gassaud, accustomed to visit in the house at Manosque, sees good to commence a kind of theoretic flirtation with the little brown Wife, which she theoretically sees good to return. Billet meets billet; glance follows glance, *crescendo allegro;*—till the Husband opens his lips, volcano-like, with a proposal to kick Chevalier de Gassaud out of doors. Chevalier de Gassaud goes unkicked, but not without some explosion or *éclat:* there is like to be a duel; only that Gassaud, knowing what a sword this Riquetti wears, will not fight; and his father has to plead and beg. Generous Count, kill not my poor son: alas, already this most lamentable explosion itself has broken-off the finest marriage-settlement, and now the family will not hear of him! The generous Count, so pleaded with, not only flings the duel to the winds, but gallops off, forgetful of the *Lettre de Cachet*, half-desperate, to plead with the marriage-family; to preach with them, and pray, till they have taken poor Gassaud into favour again. Prosperous in this, for nothing can resist such pleading, he may now ride home more leisurely, with the consciousness of a right action for once.

As we hint, this ride of his lies beyond the limits fixed in the royal Sealed Letter; but no one surely will mind it, no one will report it. A beautiful summer evening: O poor Gabriel, it is the last peaceably-prosperous ride thou shalt have for long,—perhaps almost ever in the world! For lo! who is this that comes curricling through the level yellow sunlight; like one of Respectability, keeping his gig? By Day and Night! it is that base Baron, de Villeneuve-Moans, who insulted Sister Cabris in the promenade of Grasse! Human nature, without time for reflection, is liable to err. The swift-rolling gig is already

in contact with one, the horse rearing against your horse; and you dismount, almost without knowing. Satisfaction which gentlemen expect, Monsieur! No? Do I hear rightly No? In that case, Monsieur—And this wild Gabriel (*horresco referens!*) clutches the respectable Villeneuve-Moans; and horsewhips him there, not emblematically only, but practically, on the king's highway: seen of some peasants! Here is a message for Rumour to blow abroad.

Rumour blows,—to Paris as elsewhither: for answer, on the 26th of June 1774, there arrives a fresh Sealed Letter of more emphasis; there arrive with it grim catchpoles and their chaise: the Swallower of Formulas, snatched away from his wife, from his child then dying, from his last shadow of a home, even an exiled home, is trundling towards Marseilles; towards the Castle of If, which frowns-out among the waters in the roadstead there! Girt with the blue Mediterranean; within iron stanchions; cut-off from pen, paper, and friends, and men, except the Cerberus of the place, who is charged to be very sharp with him, there shall he sit: such virtue is in a Sealed Letter; so has the grim old Marquis ordered it. Our gleam of sunshine, then, is darkening miserably down? Down, O thou poor Mirabeau, to thick midnight! Surely Formulas are all-too cruel on thee: thou art getting really into war with Formulas (terriblest of wars); and thou, by God's help and the Devil's, wilt make away with them,—in the terriblest manner! From this hour, we say, thick and thicker darkness settles round poor Gabriel; his life-path growing ever painfuler; alas, growing ever more devious, beset by *ignes fatui*, and lights not of Heaven. Such Alcides' Labours have seldom been allotted to any man.

Check thy hot frenzy, thy hot tears, poor Mirabeau; adjust thyself as it may be; for there is no help. Autumn becomes loud winter, revives into gentle spring: the waves beat round the Castle of If, at the mouth of Marseilles harbour; girdling in the unhappiest man. No, not the unhappiest: poor Gabriel has such a '*fond gaillard*, basis of joy and gaiety;' there is a deep fiery life in him, which no blackness of destiny can quench. The Cerberus of If, M. Dallègre, relents, as all Cerberuses do with him; gives paper, gives sympathy and counsel. Nay letters have already been introduced; 'buttoned in some scoundrel's gaiters,' the old Marquis says! On

Sister du Saillant's kind letter there fall 'tears;' nevertheless you do not always weep. You do better; write a brave *Col-d'Argent's* Memoirs (quoted-from above); occupy yourself with projects and efforts. Sometimes, alas, you do worse, though in the other direction,—where Canteen-keepers have pretty wives! A mere peccadillo this of the frail fair *Cantinière* (according to the *Fils Adoptif*); of which too much was made at the time.—Nor are juster consolations wanting, sisters and brothers bidding you be of hope. Our readers have heard Count Mirabeau designated as 'the elder of my lads:' what if we now exhibited the younger for one moment? The Maltese Chevalier de Mirabeau, a rough son of the sea in those days: he also is a sad dog, but has the advantage of not being the elder. He has started from Malta, from a sick-bed, and got hither to Marseilles, in the dead of winter; the link of Nature drawing him, shaggy sea-monster as he is.

'It was a rough wind; none of the boatmen would leave the quay with me: I induced two of them, more by bullyings than by money; for thou knowest I have no money, and am well furnished, thank God, with the gift of speaking or stuttering. I reach the Castle of If: gates closed; and the Lieutenant, as M. Dallègre was not there, tells me quite sweetly that I must return as I came. "Not, if you please, till I have seen Gabriel." "It is not allowed."—"I will write to him." "Not that either."—"Then I will wait for M. Dallègre." "Just so; but for four-and-twenty hours, not more." Whereupon I take my resolution; I go to La Mouret' (the Canteen-keeper's pretty wife); 'we agree that so soon as the tattoo is beat, I shall see this poor devil. I get to him, in fact; not like a *paladin*, but like a pickpocket or a gallant, which thou wilt; and we unbosom ourselves. They had been afraid that he would heat my head to the temperature of his own: Sister Cabris, they do him little justice; I can assure thee that while he was telling me his story, and when my rage broke out in these words: "Though still weakly, I have two arms, strong enough to break M. Villeneuve-Moans's, or his cowardly persecuting brother's at least," he said to me, "*Mon ami*, thou wilt ruin us both." And, I confess, this consideration alone, perhaps, hindered the execution of a project, which could not have profited, which nothing but the fermentation of a head such as mine could excuse.'[4]

Reader, this tarry young Maltese Chevalier is the Vicomte de Mirabeau, or Younger Mirabeau; whom all men heard of in the Revolution time,—oftenest by the more familiar name of

[4] Vol. ii. p. 43.

Mirabeau-Tonneau, or Barrel Mirabeau, from his bulk, and the quantity of drink he usually held. It is the same Barrel Mirabeau who, in the States-General, broke his sword, because the Noblesse gave in, and chivalry was now ended: for in politics he was directly the opposite of his elder brother; and spoke considerably as a public man, making men laugh (for he was a wild surly fellow, with much wit in him and much liquor);—then went indignantly across the Rhine, and drilled Emigrant Regiments: but as he sat one morning in his tent, sour of stomach doubtless and of heart, meditating in Tartarean humour on the turn things took, a certain captain or subaltern demands admittance on business; is refused; again demands, and then again, till the Colonel Viscount Barrel Mirabeau, blazing up into a mere burning brandy-barrel, clutches his sword, and tumbles out on this *canaille* of an intruder,—alas, on the *canaille* of an intruder's sword's-point (who drew with swift dexterity), and dies, and it is all done with him! That was the fifth act of Barrel Mirabeau's life-tragedy, unlike, and yet like, this first act in the Castle of If; and so the curtain fell, the Newspapers calling it 'apoplexy' and 'alarming accident.'

Brother and Sisters, the little brown Wife, the Cerberus of If, all solicit for a penitent unfortunate sinner. The old Marquis's ear is deaf as that of Destiny. Solely by way of variation, not of alleviation, the rather as the If Cerberus too has been bewitched, he has this sinner removed, in May next, after some nine-months space, to the Castle of Joux; an 'old owl's nest, with a few invalids,' among the Jura Mountains. Instead of melancholy main, let him now try the melancholy granites (still capped with snow at this season), with their mists and owlets; and on the whole adjust himself as if for permanence or continuance there; on a pension of 1,200 francs, fifty pounds a-year, since he could not do with five-hundred! Poor Mirabeau;—and poor Mirabeau's Wife? Reader, the foolish little brown woman tires of soliciting: her child being buried, her husband buried alive, and her little brown self being still above ground and under twenty, she takes to recreation, theoretic flirtation; ceases soliciting, begins successful forgetting. The marriage, cut asunder that day the catchpole chaise drew up at Manosque, will never come together again, in spite of efforts; but flow onwards in two separate streams, to lose itself in the

frightfulest sand-deserts. Husband and wife never more saw each other with eyes.

Not far from the melancholy Castle of Joux lies the little melancholy borough of Pontarlier; whither our Prisoner has leave, on his parole, to walk when he chooses. A melancholy little borough: yet in it is a certain Monnier Household; whereby hangs, and will hang, a tale. Of old M. Monnier, respectable legal President, now in his seventy-fifth year, we shall say less than of his wife, Sophie Monnier (once De Ruffey, from Dijon, sprung from legal Presidents there), who is still but short way out of her teens. Yet she has been married, or *seemed* to be married, four years: one of the loveliest sad-heroic women of this or any district of country. What accursed freak of Fate brought January and May together here once again? Alas, it is a custom there, good reader! Thus the old Naturalist Buffon, who, at the age of sixty-three (what is called 'the Saint-Martin's summer of incipient dotage and new-myrtle 'garlands,' which visits some men), went ransacking the country for a young wife, had very nearly got this identical Sophie; but did get another, known as Madame de Buffon, well known to Philip Egalité, having turned out ill. Sophie de Ruffey loved wise men, but not at that extremely advanced period of life. However, the question for her is: Does she love a Convent better? Her mother and father are rigidly devout, and rigidly vain and poor: the poor girl, sad-heroic, is probably a kind of free-thinker. And now, old President Monnier 'quarrelling with his daughter;' and then coming over to Pontarlier with gold-bags, marriage-settlements, and the prospect of dying soon? It is that same miserable tale, often sung against, often spoken against; very miserable indeed!

But fancy what an effect the fiery eloquence of a Mirabeau produced in this sombre Household: one's young girl-dreams incarnated, most unexpectedly, in this wild-glowing mass of manhood, though rather ugly; old Monnier himself gleaming-up into a kind of vitality to hear him! Or fancy whether a sad-heroic face, glancing on you with a thankfulness like to become glad-heroic, were not——? Mirabeau felt, by known symptoms, that the sweetest, fatalest incantation was stealing over him, which could lead only to the devil, for all parties in-

terested. He wrote to his wife, entreating in the name of Heaven, that she would come to him: thereby might the 'sight of his duties' fortify him; he meanwhile would at least forbear Pontarlier. The wife 'answered by a few icy lines, indicating, 'in a covert way, that she thought me not in my wits.' He ceases forbearing Pontarlier; sweeter is it than the owl's nest: he returns thither, with sweeter and ever sweeter welcome; and so—!—

Old Monnier saw nothing, or winked hard;—not so our old foolish Commandant of the Castle of Joux. He, though kind to his prisoner formerly, 'had been making some pretensions to Sophie himself; he was but forty or five-and-forty 'years older than I; my ugliness was not greater than his; 'and I had the advantage of being an honest man.' Green-eyed Jealousy, in the shape of this old ugly Commandant, warns Monnier by letter; also, on some thin pretext, restricts Mirabeau henceforth to the four walls of Joux. Mirabeau flings back such restriction, in an indignant Letter to this green-eyed Commandant; indignantly steps over into Switzerland, which is but a few miles off;—returns, however, in a day or two (it is dark January 1776), covertly to Pontarlier. There is an explosion, what they call *éclat*. Sophie Monnier, sharply dealt with, resists; avows her love for Gabriel Honoré; asserts her right to love him, her purpose to continue doing it. She is sent home to Dijon; Gabriel Honoré covertly follows her thither.

Explosions: what a continued series of explosions,—through winter, spring, summer! There are tears, devotional exercises, threatenings to commit suicide; there are stolen interviews, perils, proud avowals and lowly concealments. He on his part 'voluntarily constitutes himself prisoner;' and does other haughty, vehement things; some Commandants behaving honourably, and some not: one Commandant (old Marquis Mirabeau of the Château of Bignon) getting ready his thunderbolts in the distance! 'I have been lucky enough to obtain Mont 'Saint-Michel, in Normandy,' says the old Marquis: 'I think 'that prison good, because there is first the Castle itself, then 'a ring-work all round the mountain; and, after that, a pretty 'long passage among the sands, where you need guides, to 'avoid being drowned in the quicksands.' Yes, it rises there, that Mountain of Saint-Michel, and Mountain of Misery; tower-

ing sheer up, like a bleak Pisgah with outlooks only into desolation, sand, salt-water and despair.[5] Fly, thou poor Gabriel Honoré! Thou poor Sophie, return to Pontarlier; for Convent-walls too are cruel!

Gabriel flies; and indeed there fly with him Sister Cabris and her preternuptial epauletted Brianson, who are already in flight for their own behoof: into deep thickets and covered ways, wide over the South-west of France. Marquis Mirabeau, thinking with a fond sorrow of Mont Saint-Michel and its quicksands, chooses the two best bloodhounds the Police of Paris has (Inspector Brugnière and another); and, unmuzzling them, cries: Hunt!—Man being a venatory creature, and the Chase perennially interesting to him, we have thought it might be good to present certain broken glimpses of this man-hunt through the South-west of France; of which, by a singular felicity, some Narrative exists, in the shape of official reports, very ill-spelt and otherwise curious, written down sectionally by the chief slot-hound himself, for transmittal to the chief huntsman eyeing it intently from the distance. It is not every day that there is such game afield as a Gabriel Honoré, such a huntsman tally-hoing in the distance as old Marquis Mirabeau; or that you have a hound who can, in never so bad spelling, *tell* you what his notions of the business are:

'On arriving at Dijon, I went to see Madame la Présidente Ruffey, to gather new informations from her. Madame informed me that there was in the town a certain Chevalier de Macon, a half-pay officer, who was the Sieur Mirabeau's friend, his companion and confidant, and that if any one could get acquainted with *him*'—.—'The Sieur Brugnière went therefore to lodge at this Macon's inn; finds means to get acquainted with him, affecting the same tastes, following him to fencing-rooms, billiard-tables and other such places.'—

'Accordingly, on reaching Geneva, we learn that the Sieur Mirabeau did arrive there on the 5th of June. He left it for Thonon in Savoy; two women in men's-clothes came asking for him, and they all went away together, by Chambéry, and thence by Turin. At Thonon we could not learn what road they had taken; so secret are they, and involve themselves in all manner of detours. After three days of incredible fatigue, we discover the man that had driven them: it is back to Geneva that they are gone; we hasten hither again, and have good hope of finding them now.'—Hope fallacious as before!

'However, what helps Brugnière and me a little is this, that the

[5] See *Mémoires de Madame de Genlis*, iii. 201.

Sieur Mirabeau and his train, though already armed like smugglers, bought yet other pistols, and likewise sabres, even a hunting-knife with a secret pistol for handle; we learned this at Geneva. They take remote diabolic roads to avoid entering France.' * * * 'Following on foot the trace of them, it brings us to Lyons, where they seem to have taken the most obscure methods, accompanied with impenetrable cunning, to enter the town: we lost all track of them; our researches were most painful. At length we have come upon a man named Saint-Jean, confidential servant of Madame de Cabris.'—'On quitting this, along with Brianson, who I think is a bad subject, M. de Mirabeau signified to Saint Jean that they were going to Lorgue in Provence, which is Brianson's country; that Brianson was then to accompany him as far as Nice, where he would embark for Geneva and pass a month there.'—

'Following this trace of M. de Mirabeau, who had embarked on the Rhone at Lyons, we came to Avignon: here we find he took post-horses, having sent for them half a league from the town; he had another pair of pistols bought for him here; and then, being well hidden in the cabriolet, drove through Avignon, put letters in the post-office; it was about the dusk of the evening. But now at that time was the chief tumult of the Beaucaire Fair,[6] and this cabriolet was so lost in the crowd that it was impossible for us to track it farther. However, the domestic Saint-Jean'—. * * * —'a M. Marsaut, Advocate, an honourable man, who gave us all possible directions.' 'He introduced us to this Brianson, with whom we contrived to sup. We gave ourselves out for travellers, Lyons merchants, who were going, the one of us to Geneva and Italy, the other to Geneva only: it was the way to make this Brianson speak.' * * *

'When you leave Provence to pass into the Country of Nice, you have to wade across the Var; a torrent which is almost always dangerous, and is often impracticable: it sometimes spreads out to a quarter of a league in breadth, and has an astonishing rapidity at all times: its reputation is greater still; and travellers who have to cross speak of it with terror. On each bank there are strong men who make a trade of passing travellers across; going before them and around them, with strong poles, to sound the bottom, which will change several times in a day: they take great pains to increase your fear, even when there is not danger. These people, by whose means we passed, told us that they had offered to pass a gentleman having the same description as he we seek; that this gentleman would have nobody, but crossed with some women of the country, who were wading without guide; that he seemed to dislike being looked at too close: we made the utmost researches there. We found that, at some distance, this person had entered a hedge-tavern for some refreshment; that he had a gold box

[6] Napoleon's *Souper de Beaucaire!*

with a lady's portrait in it, and, in a word, the same description every-way; that he asked if they did not know of any ship at Nice for Italy, and they told him of one for England. He had crossed the Var, as I had the honour of informing you, Monsieur, above: I have the honour of observing that there is no Police at Nice.' * * * 'Found that there had embarked at Villefranche, which is another little haven near to Nice, a private person unknown, answering still to the same description (except that he wore a red coat, whereas M. de Mirabeau has been followed hitherto under a green coat, a red-brown one (*merdoré*), and a gray ribbed one); and embarked for England. In spite of this we sent persons into the Heights to get information, who know the secret passages; the Sieur Brugnière mounted a mule accustomed to those horrific and terrifying Mountains, took a guide, and made all possible researches too: in a word, Monsieur, we have done all that the human mind (*l'esprit humain*) can imagine, and this when the heats are so excessive; and we are worn-out with fatigue, and our limbs swoln.'

No: all that the human mind can imagine is ineffectual. On the 23d night of August (1776), Sophie de Monnier, in man's clothes, is scaling the Monnier garden-wall at Pontarlier; is crossing the Swiss marches, wrapped in a cloak of darkness, borne on the wings of love and despair. Gabriel Honoré, wrapped in the like cloak, borne on the like vehicle, is gone with her to Holland,—thenceforth a broken man.

'Crime forever lamentable,' ejaculates the *Fils Adoptif;* 'of which the world has so spoken, and must forever speak.' There are, indeed, many things easy to be spoken of it; and also some things not easy to be spoken. Why, for example, thou virtuous *Fils Adoptif*, was that of the Canteen-keeper's wife at If such a peccadillo, and this of the legal President's wife such a crime, lamentable to that late date of 'forever'? The present reviewer fancies them to be the same crime. Again, might not the first grand criminal and sinner in this business be legal President Monnier, the distracted, spleen-stricken, moon-stricken old man;—liable to trial, with non-acquittal or difficult acquittal, at the great Bar of Nature herself? And then the second sinner in it? and the third and the fourth? 'He that is *without* sin among you'!—One thing, therefore, the present reviewer will speak, in the words of old Samuel Johnson: My dear *Fils Adoptif*, my dear brethren of Mankind, 'endeavour to clear your mind of Cant!' It is positively the prime necessity for all men, and all women and children, in

these days, who would have their souls live, were it even feebly, and not die of the detestablest asphyxia,—as in carbonic vapour, the more horrible, for breathing of, the more *clean* it looks.

That the *Parlement* of Besançon indicted Mirabeau for *rapt et vol*, abduction and robbery; that they condemned him 'in contumacious absence,' and went the length of beheading a Paper Effigy of him, was perhaps extremely suitable;—but not to be dwelt on here. Neither do we pry curiously into the garret-life in Holland and Amsterdam; being straitened for room. The wild man and his beautiful sad-heroic woman lived out their romance of reality, as well as was to be expected. Hot tempers go not always softly together; neither did the course of true love, either in wedlock or in elopement, ever run smooth. Yet it did run, in this instance, copious, if not smooth; with quarrel and reconcilement, tears and heart-effusion; sharp tropical squalls, and also the gorgeous effulgence and exuberance of general tropical weather. It was like a little Paphos islet in the middle of blackness; the very danger and despair that environed it made the islet blissful;—even as in virtue of death, life to the fretfulest becomes tolerable, becomes sweet, death being so nigh. At any hour, might not king's exempt or other dread alguazil knock at our garret establishment, here 'in the *Kalbestrand*,' at Lequesne the tailor's,' and dissolve it? Gabriel toils for Dutch booksellers; bearing their heavy load; translating *Watson's Philip Second;* doing endless Gibeonite work: earning, however, his gold louis a-day. Sophie sews and scours beside him, with her soft fingers, not grudging it: in hard toils, in trembling joys begirt with terrors, with one terror, that of being parted,—their days roll swiftly on. For eight tropical months!—Ah, at the end of some eight months (14th May 1777) enter the alguazil! He is in the shape of Brugnière, our old slot-hound of the South-west; the swelling of his legs is fallen now; this time the human mind has been able to manage it. He carries King's orders, High Mightiness's sanctions; sealed parchments. Gabriel Honoré shall be carried this way, Sophie that; Sophie, like to be a mother, shall behold him no more. Desperation, even in the female character, can go no farther: she will kill herself that hour, as even the slot-hound believes,—had not the very slot-hound, in mercy, undertaken

that they should have some means of correspondence; that hope should not utterly be cut away. With embracings and interjections, sobbings that cannot be uttered, they tear themselves asunder, stony Paris now nigh: Mirabeau towards his prison of Vincennes; Sophie to some milder Convent-parlour relegation, there to await what Fate, very minatory at this time, will see good to bring.

Conceive the giant Mirabeau locked fast, then, in Doubting-castle of Vincennes; his hot soul surging-up, wildly breaking itself against cold obstruction; the voice of his despair reverberated on him by dead stone walls. Fallen in the eyes of the world, the ambitious haughty man; his fair life-hopes from without all spoiled and become foul ashes: and from within, —what he has done, what he has parted with and *un*done! Deaf as Destiny is a Rhadamanthine father; inaccessible even to the attempt at pleading. Heavy doors have slammed-to; their bolts growling *Woe to thee!* Great Paris sends eastward its daily multitudinous hum; in the evening sun thou seest its weathercocks glitter, its old grim towers and fuliginous life-breath all gilded: and thou?—Neither evening nor morning, nor change of day nor season, brings deliverance. Forgotten of Earth; not too hopefully remembered of Heaven! No passionate *Pater-Peccavi* can move an old Marquis; deaf he as Destiny. Thou must sit there.—For forty-two months, by the great Zodiacal Horologe! The heir of the Riquettis, sinful, and yet more sinned against, has worn-out his wardrobe; complains that his clothes get looped and windowed, insufficient against the weather. His eye-sight is failing; the family disorder, *nephritis*, afflicts him; the doctors declare horse-exercise essential to preserve life. Within the walls, then! answers the old Marquis. Count de Mirabeau 'rides in the garden of forty paces;' with quick turns, hamperedly, overlooked by donjons and high stone barriers.

And yet fancy not Mirabeau spent his time in mere wailing and raging. Far from that!—

> To whine, put finger i' the eye, and sob,
> Because he had ne'er another tub,

was in no case Mirabeau's method, more than Diogenes's. Other such wild-glowing mass of life, which you might beat

with Cyclops' hammers (and, alas, not beat the dross *out* of), was not in Europe at that time. Call him not the strongest man then living; for light, as we said, and not fire, is the strong thing: yet call him strong too, very strong; and for toughness, tenacity, vivaciousness and a *fond gaillard*, call him toughest of all. Raging passions, ill-governed; reckless tumult from within, merciless oppression from without; ten men might have died of what this Gabriel Honoré did not yet die of. Police-captain Lenoir allowed him, in mercy and according to engagement, to correspond with Sophie; the condition was, that the letters should be seen by Lenoir, and be returned into his keeping. Mirabeau corresponded; in fire and tears, copiously, not Werter-like, but Mirabeau-like. Then he had penitential petitions, *Pater-Peccavis* to write, to get presented and enforced; for which end all manner of friends must be urged: correspondence enough. Besides, he could read, though very limitedly: he could even compose or compile; extracting, *not* in the manner of the bee, from the very Bible and Dom Calmet, a '*Biblion Eroticon*,' which can be recommended to no woman or man. The pious *Fils Adoptif* drops a veil over his face at this scandal; and says lamentably that there is nothing to be said. As for the Correspondence with Sophie, it lay in Lenoir's desk, forgotten; but was found there by Manuel, Procureur of the Commune in 1792, when so many desks flew open, and by him given to the world. A book which fair sensibility (rather in a private way) loves to weep over: not this reviewer, to any considerable extent; not at all here, in his present strait for room. Good love-letters of their kind notwithstanding.

But if anything can swell farther the tears of fair sensibility over Mirabeau's *Correspondence of Vincennes*, it must be this: the issue it ended in. After a space of years, these two lovers, wrenched asunder in Holland, and allowed to correspond that they might not poison themselves, met again: it was under cloud of night; in Sophie's apartment, in the country; Mirabeau, 'disguised as a porter,' had come thither from a considerable distance. And they flew into each other's arms; to weep their child dead, their long unspeakable woes? Not at all. They stood, arms stretched oratorically, calling one another to account for causes of jealousy; grew always louder, arms set

a-kimbo ; and parted quite loud, never to meet more on earth. In September 1789, Mirabeau had risen to be a world's wonder : and Sophie, far from him, had sunk out of the world's sight, respected only in the little town of Gien. On the 9th night of September, Mirabeau might be thundering in the Versailles *Salle des Menus*, to be reported of all Journals on the morrow ; and Sophie, twice disappointed of new marriage, the sad-heroic temper darkened now into perfect black, was reclining, self-tied to her sofa, with a pan of charcoal burning near ; to die as the unhappy die. Said we not, 'the course of true love never did run smooth'?

However, after two-and-forty months, and negotiations, and more intercessions than in Catholic countries will free a soul out of Purgatory, Mirabeau is once more delivered from the strong place : not into his own home (home, wife and the whole Past are far parted from him) ; not into his father's home ; but forth ;—hurled forth, to seek his fortune Ishmael-like in the wide hunting-field of the world. Consider him, O reader ; thou wilt find him very notable. A disgraced man, not a broken one ; ruined outwardly, not ruined inwardly ; not yet, for there is no ruining of him on that side. Such a buoyancy of radical fire and *fond gaillard* he has ; with his dignity and vanity, levity, solidity, with his virtues and his vices, what a front he shows ! You would say, he bates not a jot, in these sad circumstances, of what he claimed from Fortune, but rather enlarges it : his proud soul, so galled, deformed by manacles and bondage, flings away its prison-gear, bounds-forth to the fight again, as if victory, after all, were certain. Post-horses to Pontarlier and the Besançon Parlement ; that that 'sentence by contumacy' be annulled, and the Paper Effigy have its Head stuck on again ! The wild giant, said to be 'absent by contumacy,' sits voluntarily in the Pontarlier Jail ; thunders in pleadings which make Parlementeers quake, and all France listen ; and the Head reunites itself to the Paper Effigy with apologies. Monnier and the De Ruffeys know who is the most impudent man alive : the world, with astonishment, who is one of the ablest.

Even the old Marquis snuffles approval, though with qualification. Tough old man, he has lost his own world-famous Lawsuit and other lawsuits, with ruinous expenses : has seen

his fortune and projects fail, and even *lettres de cachet* turn-out not always satisfactory or sanatory: wherefore he summons his children about him; and, really in a very serene way, declares himself invalided, fit only for the chimney-nook now; to sit patching his old mind together again (*à rebouter sa tête, à se recoudre pièce à pièce*): advice and countenance they, the deserving part of them, shall always enjoy; but *lettrès de cachet*, or other the like benefit and guidance, not any more. Right so, thou best of old Marquises! There he rests, then, like the still evening of a thundery day; thunders no more; but rays-forth many a curiously-tinted light-beam and remark on life; serene to the last. Among Mirabeau's small catalogue of virtues, very small of formulary and conventional virtues, let it not be forgotten that he loved this old father warmly to the end; and forgave his cruelties, or forgot them in kind interpretation of them.

For the Pontarlier Paper Effigy, therefore, it is well: and yet a man lives not comfortably without money. Ah, were one's marriage not disrupted; for the old father-in-law will soon die; those rich expectations were then fruitions! The ablest, not the most shamefaced man in France, is off, next spring (1783), to Aix; stirring Parlement and Heaven and Earth there, to have his wife back. How he worked; with what nobleness and courage (according to the *Fils Adoptif*); giant's work! The sound of him is spread over France and over the world; English travellers, high foreign lordships, turning aside to Aix; and 'multitudes gathered even on the roofs' to hear him, the Court-house being crammed to bursting! Demosthenic fire and pathos; penitent husband calling for forgiveness and restitution:—'*ce n'est qu'un claquedents et un fol*,' rays-forth the old Marquis from the chimney-nook; 'a clatter-teeth and madman!' The world and Parlement thought not that; knew not what to think, if not that this was the questionablest able man they had ever heard; and, alas, still farther,—that his cause was *untenable*. No wife, then; and no money! From this second attack on Fortune, Mirabeau returns foiled, and worse than before; resourceless, for now the old Marquis too again eyes him askance. He must hunt Ishmael-like, as we said. Whatsoever of wit or strength he has

within himself will stand true to him; on that he can count; unfortunately on almost nothing but that.

Mirabeau's life for the next five years, which creeps troublous, obscure, through several of these Eight Volumes, will probably, in the One right Volume which they hold imprisoned, be delineated briefly. It is the long-drawn practical improvement of the sermon already preached in Rhé, in If, in Joux, in Holland, in Vincennes and elsewhere. A giant man in the flower of his years, in the winter of his prospects, has to see how he will reconcile these two contradictions. With giant energies and talents, with giant virtues even, he, burning to unfold himself, has got put into his hands, for implements and means to do it with, disgrace, contumely, obstruction; character elevated only as Haman was; purse full only of debt-summonses; household, home and possessions, as it were, sown with salt; Ruin's ploughshare furrowing too deeply himself and all that was his. Under these, and not under other conditions, shall this man now live and struggle.

Well might he 'weep' long afterwards (though not given to the melting mood), thinking over, with Dumont, how his life had been blasted, by himself, by others; and was now so defaced and thunder-riven, no glory could make it whole again. Truly, as we often say, a weaker, and yet very strong man, might have died,—by hypochondria, by brandy, or by arsenic: but Mirabeau did not die. The world is not his friend, nor the world's law and formula? It will be his enemy, then; his conqueror and master not altogether. There are strong men who can, in case of necessity, make away with formulas (*hurner les formules*), and yet find a habitation behind them: these are the very strong; and Mirabeau was of these. The world's esteem having gone quite against him, and most circles of society, with their codes and regulations, pronouncing little but anathema on him, he is nevertheless not lost; he does not sink to desperation; not to dishonesty, or pusillanimity, or splenetic aridity. Nowise! In spite of the world, he is a living strong man there: the world cannot take from him his just consciousness of himself, his warm open-hearted feeling towards others; there are still limits, on all sides, to which the world and the devil cannot drive him. The giant, we say!

How he stands, like a mountain; thunder-riven, but broad-based, rooted in the Earth's (in Nature's) own rocks; and will not tumble prostrate! So true is it what a moralist has said: 'One could not wish any man to fall into a fault; yet is it 'often precisely after a fault, or a crime even, that the morality 'which is in a man first unfolds itself, and what of strength 'he as a man possesses, now when all else is gone from him.'

Mirabeau, through these dim years, is seen wandering from place to place; in France, Germany, Holland, England; finding no rest for the sole of his foot. It is a life of shifts and expedients, *au jour le jour*. Extravagant in his expenses, thriftless, swimming in a welter of debts and difficulties; for which he has to provide by fierce industry, by skill in financiership. The man's revenue is his wits; he has a pen and a head; and, happily for him, 'is the demon of the impossible.' At no time is he without some blazing project or other, which shall warm and illuminate far and wide; which too often blazes-out ineffectual; which in that case he replaces and renews, for his hope is inexhaustible. He writes Pamphlets unweariedly as a steam-engine: on *The Opening of the Scheldt*, and Kaiser Joseph; on *The Order of Cincinnatus*, and Washington; on *Count Cagliostro*, and the Diamond Necklace. Innumerable are the helpers and journeymen, respectable Mauvillons, respectable Dumonts, whom he can set working for him on such matters; it is a gift he has. He writes Books, in as many as eight volumes, which are properly only a larger kind of pamphlets. He has polemics with Caron Beaumarchais on the water-company of Paris; lean Caron shooting sharp arrows into him, which he responds to demoniacally, 'flinging hills with all their woods.'

He is intimate with many men; his 'terrible gift of familiarity,' his joyous courtiership and faculty of pleasing, do not forsake him: but it is a questionable intimacy, granted to the man's talents, in spite of his character: a relation which the proud Riquetti, not the humbler that he is poor and ruined, correctly feels. With still more women is he intimate; girt with a whole system of intrigues in that sort, wherever he abide; seldom travelling without a — wife (let us call her) engaged by the year, or during mutual satisfaction. On this large department of Mirabeau's history, what can you say,

except that his incontinence was great, enormous, entirely indefensible? If any one please (which we do not) to be present, with the *Fils Adoptif*, at 'the *autopsie*' and *post-mortem* examination, he will see curious documents on this head; and to what depths of penalty Nature, in her just self-vindication, can sometimes doom men. The *Fils Adoptif* is very sorry. To the kind called unfortunate-females, it would seem nevertheless, this unfortunate-male had an aversion amounting to complete *nolo-tangere*.

The old Marquis sits apart in the chimney-nook, observant: what this roaming, unresting, rebellious Titan of a Count may ever prove of use for? If it be not, O Marquis, for the General Overturn, *Culbute Générale?* He is swallowing Formulas; getting endless acquaintance with the Realities of things and men: in audacity, in recklessness, he will not, it is like, be wanting. The old Marquis rays-out curious observations on life;—yields no effectual assistance of money.

Ministries change and shift; but never, in the new deal, does there turn-up a good card for Mirabeau. Necker he does not love, nor is love lost between them. Plausible Calonne hears him Stentor-like denouncing stock-jobbing (*Dénonciation de l'Agiotage*); communes with him, corresponds with him; is glad to get him sent, in some semi-ostensible or spy-diplomatist character, to Berlin; in any way to have him stopped and quieted. The great Frederic was still on the scene, though now very near the side-scenes: the wiry thin Drill-sergeant of the World, and the broad burly Mutineer of the World, glanced into one another with amazement; the one making entrance, the other making exit. To this Berlin business we owe pamphlets; we owe *Correspondences* ('surreptitiously published'—with consent): we owe (brave Major Mauvillon serving as hodman) the *Monarchie Prussienne*, a Pamphlet in some eight octavo volumes, portions of which are still well worth reading.

Generally, on first making personal acquaintance with Mirabeau as a writer or speaker, one is not a little surprised. Instead of Irish oratory, with tropes and declamatory fervid feeling, such as the rumour one has heard gives prospect of, you are astonished to meet a certain hard angular distinctness, a totally unornamented force and massiveness: clear perspicuity, strong perspicacity, conviction that wishes to convince,

—this beyond all things, and instead of all things. You would say the primary character of those utterances, nay of the man himself, is sincerity and insight; strength, and the honest use of strength. Which indeed it is, O reader! Mirabeau's spiritual gift will be found, on examination, to be verily an honest and a great one; far the strongest, best practical intellect of that time; entitled to rank among the strong of all times. These books of his ought to be riddled, like this book of the *Fils Adoptif*. There is precious matter in them; too good to lie hidden among shot-rubbish. Hear this man on any subject, you will find him worth considering. He has words in him, rough deliverances; such as men do not forget. As thus: 'I know but three ways of living in this world: by wages for 'work; by begging; thirdly, by stealing (so named, or not so 'named).' Again: 'Malebranche saw all things in God; and 'M. Necker sees all things in Necker!' There are nicknames of Mirabeau's worth whole treatises. 'Grandison-Cromwell Lafayette:' write a volume on the man, as many volumes have been written, and try to say more! It is the best likeness yet drawn of him,—by a flourish and two dots. Of such inexpressible advantage is it that a man have 'an eye, instead of a pair of spectacles merely;' that, seeing through the formulas of things, and even 'making away' with many a formula, he see into the thing itself, and so know it and be master of it!

As the years roll on, and that portentous decade of the Eighties, or 'Era of Hope,' draws towards completion, and it becomes ever more evident to Mirabeau that great things are in the wind, we find his wanderings, as it were, quicken. Suddenly emerging out of Night and Cimmeria, he dashes-down on the Paris world, time after time; flashes into it with that fire-glance of his; discerns that the time is not yet come; and then merges back again. Occasionally his pamphlets provoke a fulmination and order of arrest, wherefore he must merge the faster. Nay, your Calonne is good enough to signify it beforehand: On such and such a day I shall order you to be arrested; pray make speed therefore. When the Notables meet, in the spring of 1787, Mirabeau spreads his pinions, alights on Paris and Versailles; it seems to him he ought to be secretary of those Notables. No! friend Dupont de Ne-

mours gets it: the time is not yet come. It is still but the time of 'Crispin-Catiline' d'Espréménil, and other such animal-magnetic persons. Nevertheless, the reverend Talleyrand, judicious Dukes, liberal noble friends not a few, are sure that the time will come. Abide thy time.

Hark! On the 27th of December 1788, here finally is the long-expected announcing itself: royal Proclamation definitively convoking the States-General for May next! Need we ask whether Mirabeau bestirs himself now; whether or not he is off to Provence, to the Assembly of Noblesse there, with all his faculties screwed to the sticking-place? One strong dead-lift pull, thou Titan, and perhaps thou carriest it! How Mirabeau wrestled and strove under these auspices; speaking and contending all day, writing pamphlets, paragraphs, all night; also suffering much, gathering his wild soul together, motionless under reproaches, under drawn swords even, lest his enemies throw him off his guard; how he agitates and represses, unerringly dextrous, sleeplessly unwearied, and is a very 'demon of the impossible,' let all readers fancy. With 'a body 'of Noblesse more ignorant, greedier, more insolent than any I 'have ever seen,' the Swallower of Formulas was like to have rough work. We must give his celebrated flinging-up of the handful of dust, when they drove him out by overwhelming majority:

'What have I done that was so criminal? I have wished that my Order were wise enough to give today what will infallibly be wrested from it tomorrow; that it should receive the merit and glory of sanctioning the assemblage of the Three Orders, which all Provence loudly demands. This is the crime of your "enemy of peace"! Or rather, I have ventured to believe that the people might be in the right. Ah, doubtless, a patrician soiled with such a thought deserves vengeance! But I am still guiltier than you think; for it is my belief that the people which complains is always in the right; that its indefatigable patience invariably waits the uttermost excesses of oppression, before it can determine on resisting; that it never resists long enough to obtain complete redress; and does not sufficiently know that to strike its enemies into terror and submission, it has only to stand still; that the most innocent as the most invincible of all powers is the power of refusing to do. I believe after this manner: punish the enemy of peace!

'But you, ministers of a God of peace, who are ordained to bless and not to curse, and yet have launched your anathema on me, without even the attempt at enlightening me, at reasoning with me! And you,

"friends of peace," who denounce to the people, with all vehemence of hatred, the one defender it has yet found, out of its own ranks;—who, to bring about concord, are filling capital and province with placards calculated to arm the rural districts against the towns, if your deeds did not refute your writings;—who, to prepare ways of conciliation, protest against the royal Regulation for convoking the States-General, because it grants the people as many deputies as both the other orders, and against all that the coming National Assembly shall do, unless its laws secure the triumph of your pretensions, the eternity of your privileges! Disinterested "friends of peace"! I have appealed to your honour, and summon you to state what expressions of mine have offended against either the respect we owe to the royal authority or to the nation's right? Nobles of Provence, Europe is attentive; weigh well your answer. Men of God, beware; God hears you!

'And if you do not answer, but keep silence, shutting yourselves up in the vague declamations you have hurled at me, then allow me to add one word.

'In all countries, in all times, aristocrats have implacably persecuted the people's friends; and if, by some singular combination of fortune, there chanced to arise such a one in their own circle, it was he above all whom they struck at, eager to inspire wider terror by the elevation of their victim. Thus perished the last of the Gracchi by the hands of the patricians; but, being struck with the mortal stab, he flung dust towards Heaven, and called on the Avenging Deities; and from this dust sprang Marius,—Marius not so illustrious for exterminating the Cimbri as for overturning in Rome the tyranny of the Noblesse!'

There goes some foolish story of Mirabeau's having now opened a cloth-shop in Marseilles, to ingratiate himself with the Third Estate; whereat we have often laughed. The image of Mirabeau measuring out drapery to mankind, and deftly snipping at tailors' measures, has something pleasant for the mind. So that, though there is not a shadow of truth in this story, the very lie may justly sustain itself for a while, in the character of lie. Far otherwise was the reality there: 'voluntary guard of a hundred men;' Provence crowding by the ten-thousand round his chariot-wheels; explosions of rejoicing musketry, heaven-rending acclamation; 'people paying two louis for a place at the window'! Hunger itself (very considerable in those days) he can pacify by speech. Violent meal-mobs at Marseilles and at Aix, unmanageable by firearms and governors, he smooths-down by the word of his mouth; the governor soliciting him, though unloved. It is as a Roman

Triumph, and more. He is chosen deputy for two places; has to decline Marseilles, and honour Aix. Let his enemies look and wonder, and sigh forgotten by him. For this Mirabeau too the career at last opens.

At last! Does not the benevolent reader, though never so unambitious, sympathise a little with this poor brother mortal in such a case? Victory is always joyful; but to think of such a man, in the hour when, after twelve Hercules' Labours, he does finally triumph! So long he fought with the many-headed coil of Lernean serpents; and, panting, wrestled and wrang with it for life or death,—forty long stern years; and now he has it under his heel! The mountain-tops are scaled, are scaled; where the man climbed, on sharp flinty precipices, slippery, abysmal; in darkness, seen by no kind eye,—amid the brood of dragons; and the heart, many times, was like to fail within him, in his loneliness, in his extreme need: yet he climbed, and climbed, gluing his footsteps in his blood; and now, behold, Hyperion-like he has scaled it, and on the summit shakes his glittering shafts of war! What a scene and new kingdom for him; all bathed in auroral radiance of Hope; far-stretching, solemn, joyful: what wild Memnon's music, from the depths of Nature, comes toning through the soul raised suddenly out of strangling death into victory and life! The very bystander, we think, might weep, with this Mirabeau, tears of joy.

Which, alas, will become tears of sorrow! For know, O Son of Adam (and Son of Lucifer, with that accursed ambition of thine), that they are all a delusion and piece of demonic necromancy, these same auroral splendours, enchantments and Memnon's tones! The thing thou as mortal wantest is equilibrium, what is called *rest* or *peace;* which, God knows, thou wilt never get *so.* Happy they that find it without such searching. But in some twenty-three months more, of blazing solar splendour and conflagration, this Mirabeau will be ashes; and lie opaque, in the Pantheon of great men (or say, French Pantheon of considerable, or even of considered and small-noisy men),—at rest nowhere, save on the lap of his mother Earth. There are to whom the gods, in their bounty, give glory; but far oftener is it given in wrath, as a curse and a poison; disturbing the whole inner health and industry of

the man ; leading onward through dizzy staggerings and tarantula jiggings,—towards no saint's shrine. Truly, if Death did not intervene ; or still more happily, if Life and the Public were not a blockhead, and sudden unreasonable oblivion were not to follow that sudden unreasonable glory, and beneficently, though most painfully, damp it down,—one sees not where many a poor glorious man, still more many a poor glorious woman, could terminate,—far short of Bedlam.

On the 4th day of May 1789, Madame de Staël, looking from a window in the main street of Versailles, amid an assembled world, as the Deputies walked in procession from the church of Notre-Dame to that of St. Louis, to hear High Mass, and be constituted *States-General*, saw this : 'Among these 'Nobles who had been deputed to the Third Estate, above all 'others the Comte de Mirabeau. The opinion men had of his 'genius was singularly augmented by the fear entertained of 'his immorality ; and yet it was this very immorality which 'straitened the influence his astonishing faculties were to 'secure him. You could not but look long at this man, when 'once you had noticed him : his immense black head of hair 'distinguished him among them all ; you would have said his 'force depended on it, like that of Samson : his face borrowed 'new expression from its very ugliness ; his whole person gave 'you the idea of an irregular power, but a power such as you 'would figure in a Tribune of the People.'

Mirabeau's history through the first twenty-three months of the Revolution falls not to be written here : yet it is well worth writing somewhere. The Constituent Assembly, when his name was first read out, received it with murmurs ; not knowing what they murmured at ! This honourable member they were murmuring over was the member of all members ; the august Constituent, without him were no Constituent at all. Very notable, truly, is his procedure in this section of world-history ; by far the notablest single element there : none like to him, or second to him. Once he is seen visibly to have saved, as with his own force, the existence of the Constituent Assembly ; to have turned the whole tide of things : in one of those moments which are cardinal ; decisive for centuries. The royal Declaration of the *Twenty-third of June* is promulgated : there is military

force enough ; there is then the King's express order to disperse, to meet as separate Third Estate on the morrow. Bastilles and scaffolds may be the penalty of disobeying. Mirabeau disobeys ; lifts his voice to encourage others, all pallid, panic-stricken, to disobey. Supreme Usher de Brézé enters, with the King's renewed order to depart. "Messieurs," said De Brézé, "you heard the King's order?" The Swallower of Formulas bellows-out these words, that have become memorable : "Yes, Monsieur, we heard what the King was advised to say ; and you, who cannot be interpreter of his meaning to the States-General ; you, who have neither vote, nor seat, nor right of speech here, you are not the man to remind us of it. Go, Monsieur, tell those who sent you, that we are here by will of the Nation ; and that nothing but the force of bayonets can drive us hence!" And poor De Brézé vanishes,—back foremost, the *Fils Adoptif* says.

But this, cardinal moment though it be, is perhaps intrinsically among his smaller feats. In general, we would say once more with emphasis, He has '*humé toutes les formules*.' He goes through the Revolution like a substance and a force, not like a formula of one. While innumerable barren Sieyeses and Constitution-pedants are building, with such hammering and trowelling, their august Paper Constitution (which endured eleven months), this man looks not at cobwebs and *Social Contracts*, but at things and men ; discerning what is to be done, —proceeding straight to do it. He shivers-out Usher de Brézé, back foremost, when that is the problem. 'Marie-Antoinette is charmed with him,' when it comes to that. He is the man of the Revolution, while he lives ; king of it ; and only with life, as we compute, would have quitted his kingship of it. Alone of all these Twelve-hundred, there is in him the faculty of a king. For, indeed, have we not seen how assiduously Destiny had shaped him all along, as with an express eye to the work now in hand? O crabbed old Friend of Men, whilst thou wert bolting this man into Isles of Rhé, Castles of If, and training him so sharply to be *thy*self, not *him*self,—how little knewest thou *what* thou wert doing! Let us add, that the brave old Marquis lived to see his son's victory over Fate and men, and rejoiced in it ; and rebuked Barrel Mirabeau for controverting such a Brother Gabriel. In the invalid chimney-nook at Argen-

teuil, near Paris, he sat raying-out curious observations to the last; and died three days before the Bastille fell, precisely when the *Culbute Générale* was bursting out.

But finally, the twenty-three allotted months are over. Madame de Staël, on the 4th of May 1789, saw the Roman Tribune of the People, and Samson with his long black hair: and on the 4th of April 1791, there is a Funeral Procession extending four miles: king's ministers, senators, national guards, and all Paris,—torchlight, wail of trombones and music, and the tears of men; mourning of a whole people,—such mourning as no modern people ever saw for one man. This Mirabeau's work, then, is done. He sleeps with the primeval giants. He has gone over to the majority: *Abiit ad plures.*

In the way of eulogy and dyslogy, and summing-up of character, there may doubtless be a great many things set forth concerning this Mirabeau; as already there has been much discussion and arguing about him, better and worse: which is proper surely; as about all manner of new things, were they much less questionable than this new giant is. The present reviewer, meanwhile, finds it suitabler to restrict himself and his exhausted readers to the three following moral reflections.

Moral reflection *first:* That, in these centuries men are not born demi-gods and perfect characters, but imperfect ones, and mere blamable men; men, namely, environed with such shortcoming and confusion of their own, and then with such adscititious scandal and misjudgment (got in the work they did), that they resemble less demi-gods than a sort of god-devils,—very imperfect characters indeed. The demi-god arrangement were the one which, at first sight, this reviewer might be inclined to prefer.

Moral reflection *second*, however: That probably men were never born demi-gods in any century, but precisely god-devils as we see; certain of whom do become a kind of demi-gods! How many are the men, not censured, misjudged, calumniated only, but tortured, crucified, hung on gibbets,—not as god-devils even, but as devils proper; who have nevertheless grown to seem respectable, or infinitely respectable! For the thing which was *not* they, which was not anything, has fallen away piecemeal; and become avowedly babble and confused shadow,

and no-thing: the thing which was they, remains. Depend on it, Harmodius and Aristogiton, as clear as they now look, had illegal plottings, conclaves at the Jacobins' Church of Athens; and very intemperate things were spoken, and also done. Thus too, Marcus Brutus and the elder Junius, are they not palpable Heroes? Their praise is in all Debating Societies; but didst thou read what the Morning Papers said of those transactions of theirs, the week after? Nay, Old Noll, whose bones were dug-up and hung in chains here at home, as the just emblem of himself and his deserts, the offal of creation at that time,—has not he too got to be a very respectable grim bronze-figure, though it is yet only a century and half since; of whom England seems proud rather than otherwise?

Moral reflection *third* and last: That neither thou nor I, good reader, had any hand in the making of this Mirabeau;—else who knows but we had objected, in *our* wisdom? But it was the Upper Powers that made him, without once consulting us; they and not we, so and not otherwise! To endeavour to understand a little what manner of Mirabeau he, so made, might be: this we, according to opportunity, have done; and therefore do now, with a lively satisfaction, take farewell of him, and leave him to prosper as he can.

SUMMARY.

DIDEROT.

THE *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, and the *Acts* of the French Philosophes: Difference in quality and in copiousness. (p. 1.)—Even stupid Memoirs better than mere Novels. The History of the Eighteenth Century of Paris, not yet condensed into intelligibility. Whether sent of God or of the Devil, it is on ground of their tillage that we now have to plough and sow. (2.)—End of a Social System: No one can see such results of his labour as the Destroyer: The *Siècle de Louis Quinze*. Denis Diderot and his life, the significant epitome of all this. Every man contains in himself a whole Spirit-Kingdom, and Reflex of the All; which only He that created can rightly understand. Diderot's hasty reckless manner of living and writing. Naigeon's *Life of Diderot* a foolish failure. The zeal of *the Devil's* house had eaten him up. Imperfect materials for any right biography of the Man. (3.)—Diderot's birth, parentage and schooling. The Jesuits recognise the boy's capabilities, and entice him to join them: Their Devil-serving skill and zeal a melancholy admonition to better men. The Diderot family. Young Denis's decided disinclination for any recognised profession. His dashing, volatile, precarious manner of life: Gives lessons in Mathematics; makes Sermons to order; but will settle to nothing. Walks chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom. A French poor-devil of a writer. Denis in love: Marriage: His excellent wife; and his scoundrel treatment of her. Translations of English: Shaftesbury's *Characteristics:* Original authorship. The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, our proper Church History. In Diderot's time, the Bookselling interest not yet drowned in the putrid deluge of Puffery. French Philosophism and French Revolution. Glimpses of Parisian Life, as shown in Diderot's Letters: Voltaire; D'Alembert; Rousseau; Grimm; Helvetius's Game-Preserves; Philosophes and Philosophesses. (9.)—Struggles, warfares and persecutions of Divine Philosophy: Its anomalous relations to Foreign Crowned Heads: Imbecile meddling of Louis and his Government. Diderot's incredible activity, and shrill-voiced energy. How Lebreton nefariously garbled his proof-sheets. The Baron d'Holbach's philosophical orgies: Heyday of Unbelief, Blasphemy and Obscenity. Diderot's free, open-handed life in Paris: His spiteful gossiping women friends, and famishing scoundrels. What little service renown can do him, he now enjoys. Of all literary men Diderot the least of a self-listener. Generous help of the Northern Cleopatra. Visits Petersburg. Old age drawing on. His *Vie de Sénèque:* Seneca, our niceliest-proportioned Half-and-half; 'the father of all such as wear shovel-hats.' Diderot's death. (32.)—Diderot's mind of extraordinary openness and versatility: a first-class literary hodman. Influence of Circumstances on character: Diderot's Polemical Philosophism and Atheism, the fruit of the age he lived in. Inevitable Atheism of mere metaphysical Logic-chopping. A *probable* God! The Universe *not* 'a Machine;' nor God a mere 'Architect,' who having made it once, now sits apart and sees it go. The Atheist false; but not so

cowardly a lie as the clamourer for a theoretical God, whose *life* bears no witness to his Presence. The Mechanical System of Thought, in its essence, Atheistic. (45.)—That 'the Highest cannot be spoken of in words,' a truth Diderot had not dreamt of: To him the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stood perennially shut; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended. The notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief thinking man perhaps ever had. All possible spiritual perversions included under that grossest one of 'proselyting Atheism.' The Marriage Covenant, a mere self-destructive solecism: The only 'eternal constancy,'—constant change: Practical consequences of such doctrine. What a feeling, in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament!* Diderot's uncleanness and utter shamelessness: How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth and significance of SILENCE; of the sacredness of 'Secrets known to all'? (51.)—Diderot's theory of 'Virtue synonymous with Pleasure,' contradicted by the stern experience of all men. Self-denial the beginning, if not the end, of all moral action. Diderot's fluent and brilliant Talk: As a Writer, hasty, flimsy, polemic; with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. Excellence of his Pictorial Criticisms: Goethe's translation of his *Essay on Painting*. The realms of Art not wholly unvisited by him: *Jacques le Fataliste: Neveu de Rameau*. Diderot not a coward; nor yet in any sense a brave man: What duties were easy for him, he did; and happily Nature had rendered several easy. French Philosophism, in the light of Universal History; compared with the rude Thoughts and Doings of those 'Juifs misérables:' Omnipotence and fruitfulness of BELIEF. (54.)

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.

FLIGHT FIRST.

The *life* of every man a most indubitable Poem, and Revelation of Infinity: All named and unnamable sorts, from the highest heroic Strophe to the lowest ribald Pasquil and libel on Humanity. (p. 64.)—The grand sacred Epos, or Bible of World-History: All working and knowing, a faint interpreting and showing-forth of the infinite *Mystery of Life*. Different *manner* of reading and uttering: The earnest Hebrew Readers; whose reading is still sacred, still *true:* Gorgeous semi-sensual Grandeurs and Splendours of the early Oriental Magi: Greek Consecration of the Flesh, and revelation of the Infinite. Wearisome iteration and reiteration, grown obsolete, of our modern readings. (65.)—Even the biography of an utter Scoundrel at times worth reading: The only thing at once wholly despicable and forgettable, your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false. If we cannot have a Speaker and Doer of Truth, let us have the melancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Cagliostro, really a Liar of the first magnitude; thoroughpaced in all provinces, heights and depths of lying. (67.)—Birth and Boyhood of the future Prince of Scoundrels: Poverty, idleness and hopeful impudence of young Beppo. Not seeing his way to be 'a gentleman,' he decides to be 'an ecclesiastic.' Intrusted to the keeping of a Convent-Apothecary: First elements of medico-chemical conjurorship. Short roads to Enjoyment, and consequent afflictions and sore contradictions. A touch of grim Humour unfolds itself in the youth: He had now outgrown their monk-discipline, and quits it forever. (73.)—Returns home to Palermo, and tries Painting and general Scoundrelism. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of enjoyment to be swallowed, there is he with all ebullient impulses ready. Finds a profitable and lasting re-

source in Forgery. Of a brawling, choleric temper: Visibly rising to a perfected Professor of Swindlery. A Treasure-digging dodge, and its catastrophe. The young Raven is now fledged for flying, and soars off. (78.)

FLIGHT LAST.

Old Feudal Europe fallen a-dozing to die. Her next awakening, the stern Avatar of *Democracy*, and new-birth into a new Industrial Age. (p. 82.)—Portentous extent and variety of Quackery and Quacks in that stertorous fever-sleep of our European world. Putrescence not more the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. National suffering ever preceded by national Crime. Dishonesty the raw material not of Quacks only, but also of Dupes. Irreversible death-doom. (83.)—Beppo's adventurous haps and mishaps in that wide-weltering life-in-death. Gift of Fore-knowledge wisely denied. Small beginnings: Forges pen-drawings out of Engravings. Marries, in a country too prone to celibacy, the beautiful Lorenza Feliciani: Domestic privations. In the charms of his Lorenza, 'a Future confused and immense:' They traffic accordingly, with much dexterity. The Count, as he now styles himself, on his own side not idle. Faded gentlemen of quality, and faded dames of ditto. Potions, washes, charms and love-philtres: The Greatest Happiness of the greatest number. (87.)—As one luxuriant branch of industry withers and drops off, others must be pushed into budding. Cagliostro in England: Successes and tribulations. Freemasonry; Grand-Cophtaship; Renovator of the Universe; Spirit-Mediums, and Phosphoric Manifestations unutterable. The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money. Cagliostro's Gift of Tongue. Generic difference between speaking and public-speaking: How to acquire the miraculous gift of long-eared eloquence. Power of Belief however infinitesimal. The Cagliostric nimbus of Enchantment: Even the good Lavater could not quite see through him. (93.)—Successes and reverses: Visits Petersburg, but quickly decamps. Mephistopheles's mortifying experience with Margaret renewed for Cagliostro: 'Count M.' and his *Cagliostro Unmasked:* Such reverses but specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. What the brilliant-looking Count and Countess were to themselves, and to each other: Cagliostro's Portrait: His probable Soliloquy, and spiritual salve for his own sores. At Strasburg, in fullest blossom and proudest radiance: The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, the inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe he ever snared. Tragedy of the *Diamond Necklace* suddenly intervenes, and Dupe and Duper are flung to the dogs. (106.)—Cagliostro again in England, living as he can: A touch of his old mocking Humour. Goethe's visit to his Family at Palermo. Count Cagliostro now rapidly proceeds with his Fifth Act: Destiny has her nets around him; they are straitening, straitening: He is *ginned*. Cagliostro's Workday ended; only his *account* remains to be settled.—To me also a Capability has been intrusted; shall I work it out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, quacklike, into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? (116.)

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.

Edward Irving's warfare closed, if not in victory, yet in invincibility: a man of antique heroic nature, in questionable modern garniture, which he could not wear. (p. 127.)—What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated and distorted one can never know: O foulest Circean draught, poison of Popular Applause! Wasted and worn to death amid the fierce confusion: The freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul. (128.)

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.

CHAP. I. *The Age of Romance.*

The Age of Romance can never cease : all Life romantic, and even miraculous. (p. 131.)—How few men have the smallest turn for *thinking!* 'Dignity' and deadness of History : Stifling influence of Respectability. No age ever seemed romantic to itself. Perennial Romance : The lordliest Real-Phantasmagoria, which men name *Being*. What fiction can be so wonderful as the thing that *is?* The Romance of the *Diamond Necklace* no foolish brainweb, but actually 'spirit-woven' in the Loom of Time. (132.)

CHAP. II. *The Necklace is made.*

Last infirmity of M. Boehmer's mind : The King's Jeweller would fain be maker of the Queen of Jewels. Difference between *making* and agglomerating : The various Histories of those several Diamonds : What few things *are* made by man. A Necklace fit only for the Sultana of the World. (p. 137.)

CHAP. III. *The Necklace cannot be sold.*

Miscalculating Boehmer! The Necklace intended for the neck of Du Barry ; but her foul day is now over. Many praises, but no purchaser. Loveliest Marie-Antoinette, every inch a Queen. The Age of Chivalry gone, and that of Bankruptcy is come. (p. 141.)

CHAP. IV. *Affinities : The Two Fixed-ideas.*

A man's little Work lies not isolated, stranded ; but is caught-up by the boundless Whirl of Things, and carried—who shall say whither? Prince Louis de Rohan ; a nameless Mass of delirious Incoherences, held-in a little by conventional politesse. These are thy gods, O France! Sleek Abbé Georgel, a model Jesuit, and Prince de Rohan's nursing-mother. Embassy to Vienna : Disfavour of Maria Theresa and of the fair Antoinette. (p. 143.) —Hideous death of King Louis the Well-beloved. Rohan returns from Vienna ; and the young Queen refuses to see him. Teetotum-terrors of life at Court. His Eminence's blank despair, and desperate struggle to clutch the favour he has lost. Give the wisest of us a 'fixed-idea,' and what can his wisdom help him! (148.)—Will not her Majesty buy poor Boehmer's Necklace? and oh, will she not smile once more on poor dissolute, distracted Rohan? The beautiful clear-hearted Queen, alas, beset by two Monomaniacs ; whose 'fixed-ideas' may one day meet. (152.)

CHAP. V. *The Artist.*

Jeanne de Saint-Remi, a brisk little nondescript Scion of Royalty : her parentage and hungry prospects. Her singularly undecipherable character. Conscience not essential to every character named human. A Spark of vehement Life, not developed into Will of any kind, only into Desires of many kinds : Glibness, shiftiness and untamability. (p. 154.)—Kitten-like, not yet hardened into cat-hood. Marries M. de Lamotte, and dubs him Count. Hard shifts for a living. Visits his Eminence Prince Louis de Rohan ; his monomaniac folly now under Cagliostro's management. The glance of hungry genius. (157.)

CHAP. VI. *Will the Two Fixed-ideas unite?*

The poor Countess de Lamotte's watergruel rations ; and desperate tackings and manœuvrings within wind of Court. Eminence Rohan arrives

thitherward, driven by his fixed-idea. Idle gossiping and tattling concerning Boehmer and his Necklace. In some moment of inspiration, a question rises on our brave Lamotte: If not a great Divine Idea, then a great Diabolic one. How Thought rules the world! (p. 159.)—A Female Dramatist worth thinking of. Could Madame de Lamotte have written a *Hamlet?* Poor Eminence Rohan in a Prospero's-grotto of Cagliostro magic; led on by our sprightly Countess's soft-warbling deceitful blandishments. (162.)

CHAP. VII. *Marie-Antoinette.*

The Countess plays upon the credulity of his Eminence: Strange messages for and from the innocent, unconscious Queen. Frankhearted Marie-Antoinette; beautiful Highborn, so foully hurled low! The 'Sanctuary of Sorrow' for all the wretched: That wild-yelling World, and all its madness, will one day lie dumb behind thee! (p. 163.)

CHAP. VIII. *The Two Fixed-ideas will unite.*

Farther dexterities of the glib-tongued Lamotte: How she managed with Cagliostro. Boehmer is made to hear (by accident) of her new-found favour with the Queen; and believes it. Drowning men catch at straws, and hungry blacklegs stick at nothing. (p. 166.)—*Can* her Majesty be persuaded to buy the Necklace? *Will* her Majesty deign to accept a present so worthy of her?—Walk warily, Countess de Lamotte, with nerve of iron, but on shoes of felt! (168.)

CHAP. IX. *Park of Versailles.*

Ineffable expectancy stirs-up his Eminence's soul: 'This night the Queen herself will meet thee!' Sleep rules this Hemisphere of the World;—rather curious to consider. Darkness and magical delusions: The Countess's successful dramaturgy. Ixion de Rohan, and the foul Centaurs he begat. (p. 170.)

CHAP. X. *Behind the Scenes.*

The Lamotte all-conquering talent for intrigue. The Demoiselle d'Oliva; unfortunate Queen's Similitude, and unconscious tool of skilful knavery. (p. 173.)

CHAP. XI. *The Necklace is sold.*

A pause: The two Fixed-ideas have felt each other, and are rapidly coalescing. His Eminence will buy the Necklace on her Majesty's account. O Dame de Lamotte!—'I? Who saw me in it?' (p. 176.)—Rohan and Boehmer in earnest business conference: A forged Royal approval: Secrecy as of Death. (178.)

CHAP. XII. *The Necklace vanishes.*

The bargain concluded; his Eminence the proud possessor of the Diamond Necklace. Again the scene changes; and he has forwarded it—whither he little dreams. (p. 179.)

CHAP. XIII. *Scene Third: by Dame de Lamotte.*

Cagliostro, with his greasy prophetic bulldog face. Countess de Lamotte and his Eminence in the Versailles Gallery. Through that long Gallery, what Figures have passed, and vanished! The Queen now passes; and graciously looks this way, according to her habit: Dame de Lamotte looks on, and dextrously pilfers the royal glances. Eminence de Rohan's helpless, bottomless, beatific folly. (p. 181.)

CHAP. XIV. *The Necklace cannot be paid.*

The Countess's Dramaturgic labours terminate. How strangely in life the Play goes on, even when the Mover has left it! No Act of man can ever die. His Eminence finds himself no nearer his expected goal: Unspeakable perturbations of soul and body. (p. 183.)—Blacklegs in full feather: Rascaldom has no strong-box. Dame de Lamotte gaily stands the brunt of the threatening Earthquake: The farthest in the world from a brave woman (185.)—Gloomy weather-symptoms for his Eminence: A thunder-clap (*per* Countess de Lamotte); and mud-explosion beyond parallel. (187.)

CHAP. XV. *Scene Fourth: by Destiny.*

Assumption-day at Versailles;—a thing they call worshipping God to enact: All Noble France waiting only the signal to begin worshipping. Eminence de Rohan chief-actor in the imposing scene. Arrestment in the King's name: There will be no Assumption-service this day. The Bastille opens its iron bosom to all the actors in the Diamond-drama. (p. 188.)

CHAP. XVI. *Missa est.*

The extraordinary 'Necklace Trial,' an astonishment and scandal to the whole world. Prophetic Discourse by Count Arch-Quack Cagliostro:—Universal Empire of Scoundrelism: Truth wedded to Sham gives birth to Respectability. The old Christian whim, of some sacred covenant with an actual, living and ruling God. Scoundrel Worship and Philosophy: Deep significance of the Gallows. Hideous fate of Dame de Lamotte. Unfortunate foully-slandered Queen: Her eyes red with their first tears of pure bitterness. The Empire of Imposture in flames.—This strange, many-tinted Business, like a little cloud from which wise men boded Earthquakes. (p. 189).

MIRABEAU.

The Life of an Original Man the highest fact our world witnesses: Such a Man a problem, not only to others, but to himself. Woe to him who has no court of appeal against the world's judgment! (p. 201.)—In such matter the world cannot be right, till *after* it has learnt the lesson the New Man brings. The world's wealth and creative strength consists solely in its Original Men, and what they do for it. Before we can have Morality and critical canons, we must have Heroes and their heroic performances. (202.)—He were a sanguine seeker who should look to the French Revolution for creators or exemplars of morality. A greater work never done in the world's history by men so small. Effervescence and heroic desperation: Mahomet Robespierre's scraggiest of prophetic discourses: Exaggerated commonplace, and triviality run rabid. A vain, cramped, atrabiliar Formula of a man, for nearly two years Autocrat of France. (204.)—And yet the French Revolution did disclose three original men. Napoleon Bonaparte in a fair way of being rightly appreciated: his gospel, 'The tools to him that can handle them,' our ultimate Political Evangel. Trimmers, moderates, plausible persons; hateful to God and to the Enemies of God. If Bonaparte were the 'armed Soldier of Democracy,' then was Danton the *Enfant Perdu* and *un*enlisted Titan of Democracy: An Earthborn, yet honestly born of Earth: Wild, all-daring 'Mirabeau of the Sansculottes:' What to him were whole shoals of immaculate Pharisees and Respectabilities? 'Let my name be blighted, then; so the Cause be glorious, and have victory!' Once cleared, why should not this name too have significance for men? (206.)—Mirabeau, by far the best-gifted of this questionable trio: Of him too it is interesting to notice the progressive dawning, out of darkness into light. Difference between an Original Man and a Parliamentary Mill. Insufficiency of Mirabeau's Biographers. Dumont's *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, not

without faithfulness and picturesque clearness; the great Mirabeau being a thing set in motion mainly by him! Lucas Montigny's biographical work, a monstrous heap of shot-rubbish, containing and hiding much valuable matter. By one means and another some sketch of Mirabeau himself may be brought to light. (209.)—His Father a crabbed, sulphurous, choleric old —Friend of Men. The Mirabeaus cast-out of Florence at the time Dante was a boy: A notable kindred; as the kindred and fathers of most notable men are. A family totally exempt from blockheads, but a little liable to blackguards. One of them vowed to chain two mountains together; and did it. They get firm footing in Marseilles as trading nobles: Talent for choosing Wives. Uncouth courtiership at Versailles Œil-de-Bœuf. Jean Antoine, afterwards named Silverstock: Haughtier, juster, more choleric man need not be sought for. Battle of Casano: The Mirabeau family narrowly escapes extinction. World-wide influence of the veriest trifles: Inscrutability of genetic history. (214.)—In the whole kindred, no stranger figure than the 'Friend of Men,' Mirabeau's father: Strong, tough as an oak-root, and as gnarled and unwedgeable. Really a most notable, questionable, hateable, lovable old Marquis. A Pedant, but under most interesting new circumstances. Nobility in France based no longer on heroic nobleness of conduct and effort; but on sycophancy, formality, adroitness: How shall the proudest of the Mirabeaus fall prostrate before a Pompadour? Literary powers, characteristics and shortcomings: Not through the press is there any progress towards premiership. The world a mad imbroglio, which no Friend of Men can set right. Domestic rebellions and tribulations: Lawsuits between man and wife: Fifty-four *Lettres de Cachet*, for the use of a single Marquis. Blessed old Marquis, or else accursed; there is stuff in thee; and stuff is stuff, were it never so crabbed! His Brother, Bailli de Mirabeau, and their frank brotherly love. (221.)—Gabriel Honoré Mirabeau, born 9th March 1749: A very Hercules; as if in this man-child Destiny had swept together all the wildnesses and strengths of his lineage. Mirabeau, Goethe, Burns: Could the well-born of the world be always rightly bred, and rightly welcomed, what a world it might be! Mirabeau's rough, vehement, genial childhood: His father's pedantic interference: No lion's-whelp or young Mirabeau will go like clockwork. What a task the poor paternal Marquis had: His troubled notions about his own offspring. Young Mirabeau sent to boarding-school in disgrace: Gains the goodwill of all who come near him. Sent to the Army: The people of Saintes grew to like him amazingly: Quarrels with his Colonel: Archer's daughter, and the tongue of the Old Serpent: *Lettre de Cachet* and the Isle of Rhé. Happily there is fighting in Corsica, and young Mirabeau gets leave to join it. His good uncle pronounces him the best fellow on earth if well dealt with. Restored to his father's favour. Visits Paris, and gains golden opinions. His father's notable criticisms: In the name of all the gods, what prodigy is this I have hatched? A Swallower of all Formulas: And has not France formulas enough to swallow, and make away with? (228.)—Neither in the rural Man-of-business department is he found wanting. Demon of the Impossible. Letter to his Uncle. Unfortunate Marriage: A young Alexander, with a very poor outlook. Tries to make a fitting home for his young Wife. Jew-debts, and another *Lettre de Cachet*. In Manosque too a man can live and read, can write an Essay on Despotism. Fresh entanglements: His Wife's theoretic flirtations: His generous efforts to make the twisted straight. A sudden quarrel beyond the limits of the royal Letter: Grim confinement in the Castle of If, at the grim old Marquis's order. O thou poor Mirabeau, thou art getting really into war with Formulas,—terriblest of all wars! A stolen visit from his Brother, the Younger Mirabeau. The old Marquis's ear deaf as that of Destiny. Poor Mirabeau; and poor shallow-hearted

Wife: The ill-assorted pair will never meet again. (240.)—Mirabeau allowed to walk in Pontarlier on parole. Old President Monnier, aged seventy-five; and his lovely sad-heroic young Wife. Mirabeau feels their danger, and implores his own wife to come to him: She declines the invitation. Temptation and jealous entanglements: An explosion: Sophie Monnier, sharply dealt with, avows and justifies her love for Mirabeau. *Lettres de Cachet* and Convent-walls: They both fly. The tough old Marquis gives chase: They reach Holland, broken in character, though not yet in heart. Who might be the first and greatest sinner in this bad business? Dear brethren of Mankind, 'endeavour to clear your minds of Cant!' Mirabeau cited before the *Parlement* of Besançon, and beheaded in Paper Effigy. Garret-life in Holland: The wild man and beautiful sad-heroic woman lived their romance of reality as well as might be expected. After eight months of hard toils and trembling joys begirt with terror, they are discovered and brought back. Mirabeau fast-locked in the Castle of Vincennes for forty-two months: His wretched Sophie in some milder Convent confinement: Their Correspondence. A last, untoward meeting: Poor Sophie's melancholy end. Mirabeau, again at liberty, storms before the Besançon *Parlement;* and the Paper Effigy has its head stuck on again. The tough old Marquis summons his children about him, and frankly declares himself invalided: They must now strive to govern themselves! Mirabeau's Demosthenic fire and pathos: But he cannot get his wife's property. (248.)—Mirabeau's life for the next five years creeps troublous, obscure: The world's esteem, its codes and formulas, gone quite against him. In spite of the world, a living strong man, who will not tumble prostrate. His wandering, questionable mode of life: Incontinence enormous, entirely indefensible: In audacity, in recklessness, not likely to be wanting. Mirabeau as a writer and speaker: Instead of tropes and declamatory fervid feeling, a totally unornamented force and massiveness,—conviction striving to convince: The primary character, sincerity and insight. Nicknames that are worth whole treatises. (258.)—Convocation of the States-General. Need we ask whether Mirabeau bestirs himself now? One strong dead-lift pull, thou Titan, and perhaps thou carriest it! How Mirabeau wrestled and strove, under such auspices: His flinging-up of the handful of dust. Voluntary guard of a hundred men: Explosions of rejoicing musketry: Chosen deputy for two places. For this Mirabeau too the career at last opens: Forty long stern years; and now, Hyperion-like, he has scaled the mountain-tops. (262.)—Madame de Staël's account of Mirabeau in the procession of Deputies. Seen visibly to have saved, as with his own force, the existence of the Constituent Assembly: Alone of all these Twelve-hundred, there is in him the faculty of a King. The brave old Marquis lived to see his son's victory; and rejoiced in it. Death, amid the mourning of a people. Imperfection of human characters; and difficulty of *seeing* them as they are and were. Mirabeau also was made by the Upper Powers; in their wisdom, not in *our* wisdom, was he so made, and so marred. (265.)

END OF VOL. V.

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